

## Introduction

The general assembly will take place on 18 December next at 11 a.m. in the office of the association. The invitations will soon be sent to all the members. We hope that the association will get the authorization to officially establish an office in Vietnam. This will allow us to offer an even more professional image in our continuing efforts in favour of the poor. We hope that we will be able to make a fresh start with the creation of our own orphanage. In that aspect we count on your complete support. If you wish to promote this project, contact me directly and do not hesitate to contact our website regularly. Our webmaster is actually working on a new presentation.

I already send you my wishes for a good health and a success for all your projects as well as our charity projects. Nice holidays for the end of the year for you and your family!

Marc de Muynck

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## Orphanages

Last time you have read about the orphanage Truyen Tin. In this newsletter we present Minh Tam, located in district 12 in the north of Ho Chi Minh City.

### Minh Tam orphanage



My name is Trần Thị Thu and I am a Buddhist nun. I do this work that coincides with my wishes and I have found peace and joy in this work. The staff of Minh Tam consists of eight persons. Everybody takes care of the children with love and they assist me in the daily work. The eldest children too take care of the younger ones and they play happily together. I take care of these children like a mother, like they are my own children. I try to give them an

education so they can become useful human beings for society and a model for the smallest. I would like them to become talented persons and that they study what they would like. It is my greatest joy and happiness when they are healthy and when they return from school returning from school showing their grades. Minh Tam was founded about 20 years ago as a private institute subsidised by private benefactors. We are responsible for our own income.

The origin of the name Minh Tam is the following. Minh Tam is the name of a small boy I welcomed him as a baby of three days old and at the age of five months we discovered that he had problems in his mental development. That was really a difficult moment. I hope that his conditions will improve in the future. Because he had difficulties in his life we choose his name to give this centre the same name.



Besides Minh Tam there live eighteen children (girls and boys) here, six boys and eleven girls. These children have been abandoned, are the fruit of illegal relationships, victims of separated parents, orphans or born in the poorest families. The children leave Minh Tam at the age of eighteen. But for now not one child has left us. I hope that the children become useful for society and that Minh Tam improves more and more. Some volunteers of the association teach English to the children. That is not always an easy task, considering that the children sometimes do not even know how to read and write Vietnamese.

For more pictures: <http://minh-tam-fr.blogspot.com/> and

[www.flickr.com/photos/marcopolo1949/sets/7215762595353232/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/marcopolo1949/sets/7215762595353232/)



*"Nous réalisons que ce que nous accomplissons n'est qu'une goutte d'eau dans l'océan, mais si cette goutte n'existait pas dans l'océan, elle manquerait." (Mère Teresa)*

### Thuy Lieu Vongphasouk et Sophie Guyot

On 16 October last, it was with the greatest joy that the Association of the French speaking in Ho Chi Minh City organized for the second consecutive year, an afternoon to the blue circus of Vietnam. All the children, so the children of the shelters the social commission takes care of, have been invited to discover a magic spectacle. The children of the orphanage Minh Tam, like the others, received a snack and a small coloring with crayons at their arrival, to have something to do during the time they have to wait it takes to install 650 children that came that day. The music has given the start signal, all the eyes, from the children and from the adults are turned towards the piste: tightrope walkers, contortionists, acrobats, jugglers, dog trainer have succeeded each other in a swirl of colours. And not to forget the clowns, who this year, let participate some children: the bursts of laughter did not stop! The spectacle was also in the hall!

These precious moments are the immediate reward for the efforts the whole organising team delivered, and only gives rise to one desire: to start again next year!



## Contributions

### Donations

Also these last months we have received donations of various persons. We thank them a lot, because without our members and these donations we could not do our work, so important for Vietnam. If we have the email addresses we thank everybody personally. But we would like to thank them also in this newsletter without mentioning all the names.

### YU in YU Man Show

You have already read about this show, but we would like to share the report of our volunteer and foster mom Liliane Gaidot of Marseille.



Saturday 24 September 2011 the charity spectacle 'YU in YU Man Show' took place in Marseille, France. This evening was dedicated to the children in orphanages and to the little pieces of our hearts we

foster. The evening did pass very well. The star YU is a Vietnamese born in Marseille who does not know his country of origin. He was very funny and that during 1.20 hours, presenting us a Chinese, a Vietnamese and a Japanese declaring his love by mimics.....!!!



There were many friends of the association, often also foster parents. Patrick and Francine, foster parents, touched us a lot as they came from Voiron only for this evening. Evelyne, foster mom was there too. Son, a Vietnamese, was there to answer questions about Vietnam. Nathalie was a great help and volunteer till the end of this adventure. Jacqueline who "emptied her attic" to help the children and who talked about the association during a Peking Express evening. Jeanne who is dedicated to the least favoured in Vietnam with the association AAV here in Marseille joined us. This evening allowed us to meet each other and we will do everything to see each other again as we were delighted to meet each other and to build sympathetic and lasting relationships. A big thank also for Marc who sent some crafts to France with the help of Victor and Aurélien. It was a beautiful exchange adventure, a drop of financial water for the association and a presentation of 'the dragon's children' having answered to various questions about the actions in Vietnam and the fostered children.

### Foster parent of the association: Rémi Bauchmann

This is a message of one of our foster parents. Not of a child, but of the association herself. We thank him very much for his fostering.

Hello Mr. President, Vice-President and all the members of "the dragon's children".

My name is Rémi Bauchman, born in the Alpes region, Côte d'Azur province in Saint-Raphaël in the Var, a region I have never left and who is for me the crib itself of my family links and the source of my artistic inspiration, because I am a concert pianist-composer.

I had the possibility to make my job of my passion and till now that has filled my life with happiness.

Being a child of the village where I was born, I have invested in my work here, because I need time to compose. But I go where I am invited in France as well as abroad: Paris, London, Tokyo and maybe in the near future a tour in China.



I have given various concerts with a charity goal and the last one was for the disadvantaged children of my community and I admit that I had the feeling that it was a successful concert and never before did I have a similar feeling. Therefore I have decided to put my musical art at the service of the poor, where there is injustice present. I am not a magician but maybe I would have liked to be one in another life, to be able to change certain revolting things and so unfair, but unfortunately that is not the case. So I can only bring a drop of water in the middle of the surface but for me that drop is essential because it gives meaning to my life.

I was interested in various associations and they have been interested in my services: Lions Club, Rotary, Institute of the river, children of the Mekong and catholic aid, but unfortunately the things did not go naturally and I, I did not find my place there. Because as I told our esteemed President during our telephone conversation because some of those have a budget of two millions euro and I do not see in what way I can be useful as they do not need my services.

From that day, my partner being Vietnamese originating from Hue, my choice naturally was drawn to "the dragon's children", who support with a heart, sincerity and clarity orphanages in Ho Chi Minh City with a small budget. It is a small structure solely composed of volunteers whose task I admire and where I think I will find my place and where I have a role to play being the official artistic foster parent and where I can put my reputation and my integrity, which is essential for me, at the service of "the dragon's children". So all the profits collected during all my concerts will be all transferred to the orphanages of Ho Chi Minh City, supported by your association.

We pledge, my partner as local representative of the Var and organizer of all my concerts and I as

pianist-composer and sponsor and as the President Mr. Buy has allowed me to wear your colours and to introduce the association to the public through the media coverage of the concerts organised in my region and maybe in other regions in France. Being the sponsor of the association underlines my engagement, my credibility and especially my honesty in my humanitarian actions to the public, future members and the SACEM in a humanitarian and disinterested objective.

I have chosen to dedicate the piece "Princess of darkness" to "the dragon's children" as a tribute to the human dedication and the wonderful work realized by the volunteers with the goal to provide a better life, a hope to the orphans and poor people of Ho Chi Minh City. In the same spirit you can find on my site the link of "the dragon's children" which will make it possible to introduce your association to a large number of persons and maybe result in supplementary memberships.

See: [www.lanhue.pham.pagesperso-orange.fr/#/6](http://www.lanhue.pham.pagesperso-orange.fr/#/6) and [www.remi-bauchmann.fr](http://www.remi-bauchmann.fr) for more information about Rémi Bauchmann and the link with the association.

### Visite à Xa Gia Canh

On 2 October last a group of 28 people visited the project of the association in Xa Gia Canh. In other newsletters you have been able to read already about this project: the construction of houses for poor people. But to see the circumstances in which those people live you realize these are often worse than you can imagine. We left at 8 p.m. with the bus and we arrived around 11 a.m.



Mr Đào Ngọc Ánh, vice-president of the People's Committee (UBND) of Xa Gia Canh welcomed us, even though it was a Sunday. He accompanied us to see the house already constructed.



The second is still under construction. Because of the rain that one is not ready yet. Mr. Hiên and Mrs Ka Diêp and their daughters, the family of the second house, welcomed us with tea and biscuits.



We continued to see other houses (not deserving that name) that will be replaced by real houses. After having visited three other families, we went to the restaurant for a Vietnamese lunch. We concluded the trip with a visit to the eco-touristic area with hot water sources and the torrents of lake Mai and returned around 9.30 pm. It was an interesting trip but also full of confrontations considering the circumstances in which these people live.



Impressions of some participants of the trip:

#### Sylvie Tollie le Clech



The visit to Xa Gia Canh interested me very much. It allowed me to see two faces of Vietnam. The touristic side with the visit to great sites, the lush, the friendly and welcoming population. The economic reality visiting those disadvantaged families. They live in very difficult conditions, have little or no means, sometimes tragic stories. We could visit the houses, see in which conditions they sleep, cook and study. They have talked to us about their working conditions, which are difficult. And despite that, the families do everything so they can send their children to school, try to improve the ordinary, offer a glass of tea, though they have nothing. It was a great lesson about life!

#### Vincent Verduron



The passage in the village of Xa Gia Canh was a severe moment, full of emotions. It was also a moral experience and I sincerely think that we can learn a lot from these destitute and neglected families. Away from the problems that surround the world.

#### Elisabeth Catel



The first impression that I got was the sympathy that existed in the group. I did not know anybody, but it was easy to integrate. Arriving in the first village, a bit remote in the country side, you feel a certain sense of calm, of peace. After the tumult in Saigon, it looks like a haven of peace. But behind the scenes, there is a lot of poverty, badly housed people (and even worse than that), living in shacks made of metal sheets and plastic covers, scrap wood and cardboard.

The families are united, pretending to do their best to live from hand to mouth. I was actually surprised by the order that reigned in one of the houses we visited. All the notebooks and schoolbooks neatly ordered. An interior neatly arranged with a few things. All the families, each for their own reasons, need to be helped (either because the mother is a widow with children that need to be raised, or because the house really needs to be remade). It was a nice lesson on courage to which we assisted. There is a lot to do, here like in many other countries. Resignation, however, does not seem to make part of the kind of lifestyle of the families we visited.

#### The third house

We are very happy to announce that the construction of the third house officially started on 6 November last. The house is for a family: Mr. and Mrs. Đinh Thị Thu Huyền, their two children, Nga and Hậu, and Mrs. Nguyễn Kim Hoa, the mother of Mrs. Huyền. We thank the generous donors, Anne and Tam Lê Duy, so this house can be constructed. Unfortunately they could not be present, because they live in Switzerland. We hope that they can be present when the keys will be handed over.



### *The fourth house*

In December probably the construction of the fourth house can start. We are very happy with this fact and thank the donor of this house very much.

### *Handover of the keys*

The construction of the second house was finished at the end of October. On 6 November last the 'handover' of the keys took place. Again, Mr Đào Ngọc Ánh, vice-president of the People's Committee, as well as the representative of the Fatherland Front, Mrs. Hoa and Mrs. Mai, the representative of the Union of Women, have sacrificed their Sunday for this small ceremony. After that the house was for the family who finally could put their few properties in the house. The others went to the house of Mrs. Mai and her husband for lunch. Around 3 p.m. the small group left with oranges, pomelos and mandarins from the garden of Mrs. Mai. An impressive day full of hospitality and contrasts.



### *Wells and water reservoir*

Soon the project for the wells and water reservoir in Xa Gia Canh will start.

### *Reminder*

We would like to remind you that we have committed ourselves to build twenty houses in three years. If you would like to finance a house, you can contact us via [contact@lesenfantsdesdragon.com](mailto:contact@lesenfantsdesdragon.com).

### **Visit to the spiruline farm in Soc Trang**



*Jeff Duboc*

In Vietnam, they express distance in time, which disturbs a lot the lover of physical sciences but which reflects a reality unchanged since long. For this day in search of the spiruline, we have to go to Soc Trang several kilometers south east of Can Tho, the big city in the Mekong delta. 230 kilometers, five hours, if everything goes well. The car waits for us at Marc's. It is 3 a.m. Saigon wakes up and the periphery is already very full of farmers who on their motorbikes carry, fruits, herbs and salads that will nourish the metropole of south Vietnam. These motorbikes are staggering, a human torso and a handlebar emerging from a shapeless mass. You have a pineapple motorbike, a tomato motorbike, a

cat grass motorbike. Tam falls asleep, the Toyota takes us via the new highway towards My Tho, soon behind us, it is still dark, the highway is peaceful. A shower and the day wakes up, the sun appears and the pillars of the bridge of Vinh Long appear in the morning brightness. A pho later, we see the bridge of Can Tho standing like a modern cathedral and that allows us to see the traffic of the Mekong, this fluvial high way, the sampans, the barges and cargo ships. The highway disappears, the size of the road gets smaller, we are driving for more than four hours.

Nothing warns us that we have arrived in Soc Trang, but suddenly Marc cries that it is here. A track between the trees, a barrier of bamboo. The driver looks for another road which he does not find and has to turn back. To pursue our way we have to cross the courtyard of a house and the owners have installed their barrier. The way is made from concrete, not much larger than a car. On the right, small houses surrounded by banana and grapefruit trees, some coconut trees, flowers, vegetables,



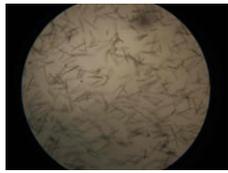
chickens and on the left a large silent canal, some fisherman and sometimes the muffled sound of a barge disturbs the quiet morning. It is not even 9 a.m. but it is already hot, very

hot, the air loaded with humidity.

Seen from the sky, the Mekong delta is like a large chess board with colours that change depending on daylight, the seasons and the growth of rice. Alternately dark or green, sometimes metallic, sometimes tender like young rice, on ground level the delta is like an inextricable labyrinth with almost immovable water. Only some drifting leaves show the little movement of the water. The boatmen who know the water labyrinth use it to shorten the distances and to escape the tax collectors and their taxes. Here the school bus is a barge and a bridge constructed by the association has allowed the children to avoid a detour of twelve kilometers to go to school.

The car enters the church yard of Father Nguyễn Văn Đầy where the first spiruline farm is located as well as a pump house and water cleaning station. The yard is big, with flowers and behind the church you notice the orchard. The first impression you have when you get out of the car is the quietness, the deafening silence as well the available space, an enormous luxury for the habitants of Saigon. You smell the river, the almond flowers, nature, a kind of liberty for everyone that lives in the heart of the vibrating metropolitan of the south. And behind a small building, the first farm is there. Two covered basins, green water that moves on the rhythm of two

paddle wheels, with nets to prevent the animals and the insects to pollute the water and its precious algae, some clean utensils to harvest it. The drying and conditioning room is in the small building.



A microscope allows us to meet, for the first time that day, small spiral shaped filaments in the green liquid. It seems too simple. To produce spiruline you need to check constantly

the acidity, its cleanness, not to make it turn to quick in order not to break the algae, not harvest it too quick neither too slow. The drying time is precise and is done by machine. Once it is vacuum-packed, it should be kept far from daylight. It is a painstaking process not allowing any freedom for a product that in the end is a food complement.

Dep is employed full-time by the farm and watches over the production. Behind the building is the water purification station. During his first visit in the delta, the traveler has the impression to visit the Garden of Eden because the lustrous vegetation, the fruits, the vegetables the rice, the water, but in fact all this is very fragile, incredibly fragile and in a huge danger. Polluted by current human activity, carrying in its silt the dioxin dropped by American airplanes on the Ho Chi Minh trail during the war, the course of the Mekong will change profoundly with the achievement of various dams still under construction in China, in Myanmar and in the higher part of Laos. This threatens in the first place, Tonle Sap, a large natural reservoir for the water and the rice in Cambodia and the whole Vietnamese delta. With the global warming that provokes the rising of the seawater levels, salt water penetrates deeper in the delta, rendering certain grounds useless for agricultural use and the cape of Camau is on the verge of disappearing.

For the inhabitants of the delta, it actually means one rice harvest per year less, the reduction of available land and drinking water that is more and more difficult to find. Therefore it is important to supply clean water and to treat used water in a populated area.

It is here that the movies *The Children of the Dragon* and *In the Heart of the Mekong* have been filmed.

After a coffee and bananas from the garden of Father, we climb on the motor bikes, with destination the grocery of Mr. Trần văn Mây, location of the second farm. A small concrete track alongside a smaller canal, again the lustrous vegetation, a small wooden bridge. We arrive at a canal crossing, a house with a wooden façade crafted in detail, in the

shadow almost fresh in the surrounding drowsiness, a surprising place of calm hardly disturbed by the noise of some sampans passing on the water of the canal. An eternal peace reigns here like a desire to sit down and leave time to time, but it is not the time to dream, the bravery piece of the day awaits us.

The meeting with the People's Committee is starting. The association had the permit to construct the spiruline farms, but not one to build houses for the poorest or the wells. The province finally gave its permission and it suffices to continue what had already been started. The minimum objective is to build a new house and ten wells. The province finally has given his authorization and it is a matter of continue what had already been started. The minimum objective is to construct a new house and ten wells in the area. The officials of the People's Committee of

Xã Hưng Phú arrive. They are three, the chef and his two deputies. The discussion starts by exchanging copies of the various permits that had already been sent by mail. They compare the copies with the originals, everyone puts his copies in the files. Finally the discussion starts, or rather Marc begins with apologizing to have started the site without the proper authorizations and that now they are there, the association would like to build one house and ten wells in the coming year with the blessing and cooperation of the People's Committee. The deputy of the People's Committee asks our help to speed up the project of the province for running water in this sector, and the officials question themselves to find out if they have 12 000, 14 000 or 15 000 inhabitants. Finally the official of the sector explains us that he will get back to us about the sites for the wells and the family that will be the beneficiary of the house. After that, we visit the second farm with the officials, pictures are taken and after that we return to our host for lunch with the



officials. The table is covered with stuffed vegetables, grilled pork, spring rolls, a seafood hotpot, a real royal feast. The ice starts to melt, literally and figuratively, empty beer cans pile up, the yo's echo into the air. Progress is on its way but not too quick anyway. The school barge passes on the canal with on the bride high school girls in a white ao dai shining in the light. A postcard from another era. It is almost 1 p.m. and our new friends have to return to their posts. We shake hands under the sun, we exchange acknowledgments and the People's Committee leaves and disappears under the trees. And we, we take in some more breaths of this peaceful place.

Back at the church we load the stocks of spiruline (even microscopic, when there is a lot, it is heavy, my back will discover later). Marc handles the administrative files with Father Nguyễn Văn Đầy. Then the departure hour arrives. Five hours to return to Saigon. The track disappears in the distance, the road gets larger, the highway, its busses and its trucks. Tam falls asleep in the back of the Toyota. What to remember of this day in the heart of the delta? Every country having rice as main food worries about alimentary deficiencies for the poorest parts of their population. Spiruline is one of the possible answers to these deficiencies. Its production requires few means but rigidity. It is possible to produce a lot of it in Asian south east. All the worries are related to the commercialisation and the use of it. The poorest layers of the population do not know spiruline, its use and its benefits. How to assure that the production on a large scale meets the quality criteria and sanitary norms? How to educate the population? How to distribute? How can those who need this magic alga use it? All these questions require answers in order to help those populations that have to eat to live better and their children to grow better.

### **Impressions of a godfather (and godmother) Can you tell something about yourself?**



My name is Le Duy Tam and I am an overseas Vietnamese (Viet Kieu), I live abroad (Switzerland) since 46 years. I am married with Anne.

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

We are a foster dad and foster mom (my wife and I) of a small girl since March 2011.

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

After several visits with Marc to orphanages and I could see what he does for those children.

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

Being a foster dad or foster mom means to be involved for a long time (if the child is young) to accompany and help the child on the long way of life, that life which has been difficult for some children since birth.

#### **Why did you choose Vietnam and the association 'dragon's children'?**

It is normal for me to choose Vietnam. Vietnam has always been in my flesh and heart. Why the Dragon's Children? That is a coincidence. I contacted Marc for a project for filtering clean water

for another association in favour of the poor population in the Mekong, and from the beginning we had many problems. I must say that we have almost the same age which explains maybe that we almost have the same view about things in life. Since December 2010 I am a member of the association the Dragon's Children.

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

We are the foster mom and foster dad of a little girl of now seven years old.

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

Yes, several times each time I visit my family in Ho Chi Minh City and I return to the country about twice a year.

#### **Can you tell more about your impression?**

It is difficult to become a foster mom and foster dad. You help a child but they cannot choose you. It is a long apprenticeship to "tame" the child. As said Saint-Exupéry in the Petit Prince "You become responsible for ever for what you have tamed." My wife will come to Vietnam in May 2012 to visit the family and her foster child she has not seen yet....

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

In the language we have in common: Vietnamese, when I visit her.

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

The most moving moment was the moment we decide to become foster mom and foster dad. We do not have children, but I imagine it is like a birth (except that we are not parents), you do not choose, you accept the child the way she is....

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

No, but it will be good to exchange points of view in the group 'Friends of Dragon's Children' (Amis des Enfants du Dragon).

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

Fostering is good because you leave the child in his natural environment, in the world he has always lived in. I have seen that adoption and integration in another life, another culture, another world is not an easy thing. That is why I have always been against adoption, to tear away a child from his own country, his own culture, creates unexpected physical and mental sufferings. Years are necessary to find their own culture again (if they have the possibility and a strong personality).

## Impressions of a volunteer



### Can you tell something about yourself?

My name is Sylvain and I am married to Lien Chau. Living in Vietnam since three years, it is a choice of life my wife and I made after having lived together in France for several years. We are both delighted about this choice and to be able to be useful for the least favoured from time to time.

### Since when are you a volunteer?

Almost three years ago, I contacted Marc shortly after I arrived in Vietnam.

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

In fact, discovering Vietnam you cannot remain insensitive for the reality of life of many of the Vietnamese.

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

In ten years scouting in France, I could accompany my team during a mission to Burkina Faso.

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

Vietnam.

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

In my case, it is my second country, because it is the one of my in-laws. So, it is obvious special and very important to be able to make yourself useful.

### Why did you choose the association the children of the dragon?

Looking on the internet for associations, I quickly got in touch with Marc. The contact was easy thanks to his personality, and logically joined his approach, his projects, sharing his ideas.

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

Even, if sometimes it is difficult to combine it with my work, I first put the internet site on line, further according to what is necessary. For example at the moment we are developing plans for a new installation for the spruiline farm, I take care of the plans.

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

In fact, you have often only a partial view of Vietnam if you stick to the city life, to its professional environment. Helping on a small scale and within my time limits, as a volunteer, in return I find also a lot of joy, balance, and that allows you to stay 'down to

earth'. You go beyond the postcard about Vietnam, it is a real experience, of the heart.

### What has been your most moving moment?

My first visit in an orphanage, children and babies abandoned at birth who could find a shelter and some attention. A lot of emotions mixed with sadness, about their situation, but also their parents and finally joy to know that the volunteers are there for them.

### What do you find difficult about being a volunteer in Vietnam (or elsewhere)?

There are sometimes ups and downs, reach out to people, share a maximum to better understand and integrate.

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

I simply cite: "Share your bread, it decreases – Share your roof, it will not decrease – Share your joy, it will increase."

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

Vietnam is a country to experience and the Vietnamese extraordinary people. You do not stay the same. Ten years after I did a small traineeship of two months, I find myself again in this country I love, among family. Let yourself seduce too!

## Impressions of a council member



### Can you tell something about yourself?

My name is Marc de Muynck (Belgian origin from my grandfather from my mother's side). I was born in 1949 in Arras, capital of Pas-de-Calais. After having worked a year as electro-mechanic, I joined the parachutist of the navy infantry of Manne I stayed in the army for 32 years. I am father of a boy of 36 years and a grandfather twice. I like to travel, paint if I have time, I am also a philatelist, but the volunteering does leave only little space to perform these activities. .

### What made you decide to establish an association for orphans in Vietnam?

Everywhere where I served I always was part of associations (corporate or otherwise) At the moment of my retirement I started to travel, mainly in Asia. In 2001 I came to discover Vietnam. That was the first time I became aware of the social difficulties of this poor country. In 2003 I tried to develop humanitarian projects in Myanmar, but it is very difficult to obtain a work permit as a humanitarian worker in this country. That was what made me go back to

Vietnam in 2006, where worked as a volunteer during six months for a Swiss NGO. This last experience did not match completely with my vision of international aid. Therefore I returned in 2007 to try to take an individual social step according to how I see those things, I travelled small villages and I went to look for projects and after that I presented them to French associations and NGO to obtain financial support. Then in the beginning of 2009, we have decided with a Vietnamese friend, BUI Huy-Lan, living in France, to create the association the dragon's children. The link I have with Vietnam is different, is indefinable, composed of a bundle of sensations that make me feel good here.

**Since when are you the president?**

Since the creation of the association.

**Can you tell something more about how it is to be the president of the association?**

Vice-president is only a title to create an official function within the group, I consider myself like player in the field close to the beneficiaries of the projects. I try to be the engine for the volunteers who help us here.

**Can you tell some more about how it is to be the vice-president of an association whose activities take place in Vietnam while you live in France?**

Like a popular proverb says: "Everybody his job, the cows are well taken care of." This means that I consider that the association in France takes for a great part care of the administrative tasks. The responsibilities of the administrative council and its members are described in article 6 of our statutes: "The council takes care of a good functioning of the association. He undertakes, organises and starts actions necessary for the pursuit of the statutory goals. The tasks of the council are specifically the following:

- regularly inform the members about the activities of the association
- promote the association
- look for funds destined to finance the activities of the association
- manage the funds of the association taking care that the costs for promotion and administration do not exceed 10% of the business figure
- management and remuneration of the staff of the association if needed,
- prepare the annual general assembly providing with the convocation and the agenda, the accounting report and a report of the activities for the past year, a budget and an activity plan for the current year

With regard to me, I consider myself a player of the field, I am the permanent link between the council and the country of intervention, the advantage of residing in Vietnam is that I see all the actions in real time.

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

2011 has been a year of a big disappointment and sadness when the children of the Pagoda "Tiên Phước II" which we supported have been taken away and entrusted to the orphanage "Làng thiếu nhi Thủ Đức". I saw the children very often, it has really been heart-breaking. This event has caused us to consider the creation of a shelter for about 50 children who will carry the name of our association. The process is ongoing.

**Can you tell us if you have encountered difficulties with regard to the work of the association?**

Not really, because I think I am very well capable to adapt to all situations, it is necessary to embrace the whole Vietnamese culture and to share it. Yes. There is one big problem, which is speaking its language. The relations with the authorities are friendly, in all situations you must be very patient, but that maybe will not be worse than with our western administrations.

**Can you tell us about the most important or most impressive accomplishment with regard to the association?**

As the president already said in his interview, maybe to obtain a permit to officially operate in all legality and to keep it. But I think that the most important accomplishment will be, the day that I will see the beginning of the construction of our future shelter for children.

**Do you have a tip for the members, the foster parents or the volunteers?**

Believe in what you do and keep faith in all your actions. Never waste an opportunity to talk about the association in your surroundings, use all the communication means (local press, general or specialised, internet and social networks).

**Do you want to tell something else to the readers?**

Personally no, I already inform them via mail (maybe even too much....?), I am looking forward to learn the proposals that our President will present us soon.

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For more information about the association and his activities see: [www.lesenfantsdudragon.com](http://www.lesenfantsdudragon.com).

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