



HEART REACH AUSTRALIA

Former Patron Peter Brock

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Director Chris O'Dempsey

The needs of people are always present, and as Heart Reach moves around amongst the poor and especially children and families in more remote areas, the needs seem more pronounced. Because of the generosity and support of people who care, we are making a difference in the lives of so many. Thank you to EACH OF YOU who have contributed!.

SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM Over 3500 have been impacted by the programs in 6 different provinces. Needy children have again been able to attend school, and get free medical care. Many still need sponsors. So many amazing stories that cause both tears and laughter! It is hard not to get involved!



DUONG, seen here several years ago, and several weeks ago. He was in school, but kept repeating. His size and mental learning skills are both less than his friends.. he was told he could not learn, could not work.. and began to believe these negatives. We are currently seeking to get him a job where size and education are not the priorities.. and are beginning to instil self belief in who he is, and who he can become! This is so common in any country.. our words can have amazing impact for good or bad!! Like Duong, all the kids in our sponsorship program get heaps of support, guidance, practical help and hands on direction. This is one of the key differences in our programs to many... Little Vy.. her mother has Aids.. is one of twins we support. She is not infected.. both kids doing well!



FIRST AID TRAINING After taking so long to get the right people to open the doors into High Schools.. I literally do not have enough days to meet the invitations to present First Aid and CPR to all who ask. Even in the public and medical sectors.. this applies. I am finding many doctors are attending the sessions.. it is not being taught in their primary medical training before they specialise. Bit of a worry.. but just another reason this program MUST get some support to go throughout the whole of Vietnam. School by school is a start.. but I hope to get to see the Health Ministry and get it into every school and public sectors training agenda! For the record.. the kids LOVE to programs.. and many keep sneaking back into classes on my follow up visits!! Always fun..

VIETNAMESE NEW YEAR (TET) WE see glimpses of this in Australia, but Vietnam basically shuts down for 10 days, and the city millions return to their home region.. giving provincial towns and villages an influx of people only seen on this time of year. For me, apart from this year having a week with Angel in Giao Thuy.. and visiting half of Vietnam in this time (it seemed like it!!) I also was able to see many of the kids being sponsored.. and check their situations in a way I cannot when just catching up in schools. The good news, is that EVERY ONE of our kids.. because of sponsors support, are doing brilliantly. Apart from Duong (above), none are not passing above average, and most are well above average. It means few do not graduate.. and those few we have been able to put into training work situations.. (they are more hands on than classroom oriented). We also have about 6 kids going through university and colleges because of support. HRA cannot pay these fees.. what we get in fundraising and donations is all that we can use.. so thank you so much.. for sponsoring these kids.. and making their future look so good! I was asked once by Tim Costello how I survive with no wage.. and he said 'you will never keep going'!! 28 years later because people care, we can do this.. together. (Angel keeps us alive, and I am so grateful for her support!)

Thao and My, standing amid the colour of the TET flower market.. are both kids from the Mekong Delta.. both had no future..both now are engaged in building one! Thao in Uni, My in hairdressing.



AWARD I was surprised to learn that the Vietnam Government had arranged a special dinner and award ceremony during my visit. It was an honour to be the first non Vietnamese (62 nd recipient) to receive the Medal of Honour.. a memorial medal from the Health and Education offices of Vietnam. I have seen many good things happen over 28 years.. but there have been so many times of frustration when paperwork and time delays have made us impatient.. so much to do.. so I am honoured to have this, but I hope it can open the way to really begin to make a difference. I want to leave more of a legacy in Vietnam than footprints in the dusty tracks!!



Giao Thuy.. a sleepy village.. inundated by families from all over Vietnam for Tet holidays.. a common site in every tow, city or village in Vietnam. In a short time.. streets again are back to the quiet avenues for locals... very typical.



MEDICAL AMBULANCE BOAT.. CLINIC.. OTHER PROGRAMS.. So much still going on in Vietnam.. the New World Hotel's support continues this year (but without GM David Wicker, who has left after 6 years) .. The Ambulance Boat is having an increasing demand on it's use.. the building program for Quynh and her Mum in Dong Ha is finished and has had an amazing impact on their quality of life. These and so many things are on the HRA website (www.heartreachaustralia.com) click the 'f' (facebook) link.. I try to keep things updated. (Sorry, not my strength, but hopefully most is there to see.)

I was surprised and greatly blessed by a couple from the USA.. they sat behind me in the aircraft from Hue to Saigon and as we chatted, they asked about the programs.. and for much of the trip as I tried to look after my shoulder and respond, we discussed the kids and their situations.. what we are doing etc. Mid way in the flight.. a hand came forward to me with a cheque.. USD \$1000. I was blown away.. a bit emotional.. and as I said to them.. in 28 years that has never happened! Thank you Lowell and Karen.. you are a real blessing. Because of TET, our golf day fundraiser on Australia Day.. way a total wipe out.. 12 players.. no profit.. (despite Craig working so hard! So this was special. It would be great to get sponsors.. but smaller groups that often achieve more.. seldom get the recognition.. knighted or etc. That's fine.. those who DO help know it is ALL being used and used well!! You are a special people!

Several sponsors visited their kids.. great time for all involved.. and can always be arranged if you visit Vietnam. We try to keep you updated where possible.. on occasions we miss catching kids on a particular trip.. but our in country people always follow up. Thank you again. You should all be happy and proud of your contribution to these kids lives.

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