



# Newsletter

no. 1 - July 2011

## Introduction

Welcome to the first newsletter of the association 'les enfants du dragon' issued in English and French. Since the start of the association in 2009 so many things have been achieved but still many more need to be done for the children of the dragon. We decided that it is the right moment to start issuing a two monthly newsletter in both English and French. In our newsletter you can read about our activities, our achievements, the current projects, the experiences of volunteers and foster parents.

Enjoy reading this newsletter.

Marc de Muynck

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## Numbers and facts

Did you know that:

- We try to help the children in 4 orphanages
- these orphanages are located in district 12 and district Bình Tân.
- About 200 children live in these orphanages :about 120 boys and 80 girls live in these orphanages.
- 31 children have a foster parent.
- 20 men and women are taking care of the children.
- The youngest child only a few months old is and the oldest 18 years.
- 10 foreigners are volunteering in HCMC.
- The volunteers teach, build houses and work on the spirulina farm.
- We have 20 associate members and 81 members.

## Contributions

### Bicycles

In June we received two bicycles donated by Magalie and Thomas, the hydro-team for which we are very grateful. See for more information about their project : <http://hydrotrip.jimdo.com/>. We also received 2 bicycles from Marie Pierre and Cécile, teachers at the "Boule and Bill" school who will return to France. We would like to thank all of them through this newsletter.

## House

On 21 July the 3 volunteer students of the north of France finished the construction of a house in Xã Gia Canh in the province of Đồng Nai, for a very poor family in an ethnic village. This family belongs to the ethnic group of (dân tộc) Châu Mạ. This first house in the village marks the start of a building program of 20 houses. The cost of a house including sanitary provisions is €1.200. We are looking for funds for this project.



We are also going to drill some wells and we will install a water treatment station to give the inhabitants drinking water.

See their blog for more information:  
<http://valvietnam.canalblog.com/>.

## Electricity

A team of three volunteers (engineer and technician) of the association "Electriciens Sans Frontières" has installed engines with low electric consumption and security systems that will allow the farms that cultivate spirulina will continue to have electricity in case of power cuts, See for more information:  
<http://www.electriciens-sans-frontieres.org/>.

## Other contribution(s)

Aurélien a young volunteer who recently has finished a course about the spirulina culture at the Professional Training and Agricultural Promotion Centre in Hyères (France) has been able to re-introduce a new bag for spirulina and trained personnel about harvesting spirulina during his stay from 10 May till 23 June at the farm of Hậu Bồi in Sóc Trăng province.

"We realize that what we accomplish is only a drop in the sea, but if this drop would not exist, it would be lacking"  
Mother Teresa

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In Marseille Liliane, Jacqueline (a nurse) and Jérôme (head of a school) are – under the umbrella of 'on va sortir' – busy to start a project in order to let a lot of people know about the "the children of the dragon", to find new members and to collect money by amongst other things convincing people to donate things they do not need or want anymore and sell these.

### **First meeting**

Sunday 24 July the first small meeting for all people taking part in our actions: volunteers and the persons in charge of the shelters we support took place.

Marc de Muynck introduced everybody present. After this introduction the people present could talk some more drinking a glass of Vietnamese 'Champaign' and enjoying some Vietnamese snacks. A successful event to get better acquainted to each other.



We would like to thank the management of "la petite maison" for lending us their meeting room for this event.

### **Foster program**

A foster parent will take care that the foster child can go to school by paying a monthly contribution. The communication takes place through the association. The foster parents can also visit the foster child in Vietnam. At the moment 31 children have a foster mom or foster dad or both. We hope this number will continue to rise. See for more information:

<http://www.lesenfantsdudragon.com/Parrainage.php>.

### **Impressions of a foster parent**

*Can you tell something about yourself?*

My name is Patrick and my wife's name is Francine. We are originally from the Ardennes, but we have lived since 30 years in the Isère. I

have worked as a sales manager in France for an English-Dutch steelmaking company, which recently was taken over by an Indian group. I have been retired since almost 2 years and since almost a year are we a member of the association.

*Since when are you a foster parent?*

April 2011

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

I intended to help needy people, so I tried to bring a modest contribution to relief and improve the life condition of a young Vietnamese.

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

Always attracted by Asian countries. I found les Enfants du Dragon "by chance" on the web. I saw all the things achieved. I was impressed by that.

*Did you already meet your foster child?*

Yes we did in April this year.

*Can you tell about your impression?*

Very moving, but the visit was too short (just a couple of hours). We intend to come back as soon as we can.

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

By mails or postcards sent to Quarouble. Very frustrating because we can't communicate directly through internet with our goddaughter. Therefore a real communication isn't possible.

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

Incontestably our first contact with our goddaughter An.

### **Impressions of a volunteer**

*Can you tell something about yourself?*

Jean François Duboc, 44 years, divorced and I have two teenage children. I am an electronic engineer. Coming to live in Vietnam was like a child's dream having become reality at the end of 2008. The dream has become like a love story with the country, its history, its culture and the Vietnamese people.

*Since when are you a volunteer?*

I started in March 2011.

*What made you decide to do volunteer work?*

I wanted to get involved already for years, be useful, to be an involved citizen, to give



meaning to daily life, change lives. As I had to divide my time between various countries for my work, it was not possible to be a volunteer before.

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

Yes, in a very timely way in India.

*In which country are you a volunteer now?*

I am a volunteer in Vietnam.

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

I do not know. In India it was just after the tsunami of 2006. The situation was very particular. Moreover, the misery is bigger than in Vietnam. It is present everywhere, it 'attacks' you. In India I had the impression that regardless what you do, nothing could change the situation. Vietnam is a more homogenous society even though there is a lot to do.

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

The association is not a big machine. The projects have a human scale, the volunteers act based on their willingness and availability. They are simple persons who act really and who do not have another objective than being useful.

*What kind of volunteer work do you do?*

I give English classes in the orphanage Minh Tam in district 12 in HCMC, 3 times per week. The group is composed of 16 children. 5 are between 11 and 12 years and start English this year at school. 5 are between 7 and 9 years and they go to school but do not learn English at school yet and 6 who do not know how to read or write. The difficulty is to help the oldest ones in learning English, to prepare for the middle and to keep the smallest interested. You need to make a mix of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation which is a real concern and games to keep the smallest with the oldest. On Saturdays together with Marieke and Trinh, we are three and allow us to be more efficient and allow at the same time more freedom to do games, to draw and to do discovery activities. A small microscope allowed us to have a wonderful morning in the garden. We are waiting with impatience the end of the rainy season so we can use the small telescope.

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

A very good thing. Even though sometimes it is frustrating not being able to do everything you would like to do, every smile is a powerful force to make us continue. To help gives a meaning to every day, it is a creative engine to find new activities. This gives a certain meaning to every day that passes and positive energy to compensate for the gray days.

*What has been your most moving moment?*

When I arrive and the children open the gate, the joy of the children when we do new things, their pride when they manage to make the exercises... every hour spent with them is moving.

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

You would like to do more, but that is not easy. Some children obviously have problems, need more attention. We should have more people for every age-group.

*Do you have a tip for other volunteers?*

Patience. You need to be patience. The communication is sometimes difficult, but you manage always. There are days that are more difficult than others and on those days you need to be patient.

<http://www.lesenfantsdudragon.com/temoignage.php>

#### **Addresses:**

##### *France*

Les enfants du dragon  
73 rue Roger Salengro  
59243 Quarouble  
Tel. +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

##### *Switzerland*

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



**Board of the association:**

President Mr. BUI HUY Lan  
Vice-President Mr. Marc DE MUYNCK  
Secretary Mrs. Claudie LETAUT  
Treasurer Mr. Thierry LETAUT  
Communication  
Representatives Mr PHAM Hai  
in Switzerland Mr Lê Duy Tam  
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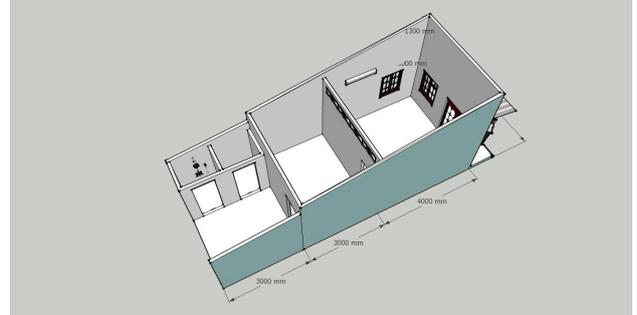
Editors Marieke van der Pijl  
Marc de Muynck  
Translators Marieke van der Pijl  
Marc de Muynck  
Lay-out Marieke van der Pijl

For more information about us and our activities see:

<http://www.lesenfantsdudragon.com/>



"Love house" details:



Some of our sponsored children:



Orphanage: "Nhà Mẹ Côi Truyền Tin"

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