Signs for Hope

Prayer letter - April 2016

Vietnam: A Collage of Sights and Sounds

by Jana Lechner, SFH board member

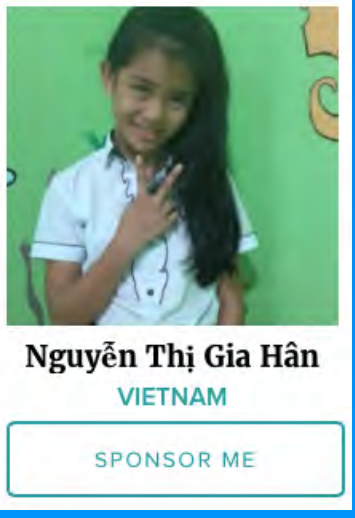
Mopeds and motorcycles are everywhere - flying by with adults and small children, workers carrying 4' tall vases strapped alongside, builders carrying 12' long pipes on their way to work….. Everyone honking to yield, to pass… New construction everywhere you look….Sandy beaches lined with brides and grooms and pigeons all set to fly at the toss of their food and wedding photographers with cameras ready to get that perfect shot…..fishermen and their basket boats ready to head out to sea….Fruit stands with jackfruit, durian, mango, rambutan, lychee…all sizes, colors and shapes….Markets with rows and rows of embroidered or hand printed silks ready for measuring and design….The Dragon Bridge that shoots fire and water from his mouth to delight onlookers… tiny restaurants with bowls of hot Pho (pronounced Fa uh) - a delicious broth, with noodles and small bits of meat, with bowls of mint, basil, crackers, pickled onions, peppers and green mango all there to create your own bowl and fill your hungry lunch time stomach….green rice fields with hatted scarecrows or white fabric blowing in the winds to scare away the birds….old and young alike wearing traditional dress and conical hats to block the sun….people smiling and helpful… walking and enjoying their days…. so much beauty and culture to see, enjoy and absorb….

BUT THE BEST SIGHT OF ALL…was driving up to a small concrete building and seeing 9 eager faces waiting for us to exit our taxi. 9 deaf students ranging in age from 8-18 greet us with eager, smiling and curious faces. They welcome us with loving arms. We leave our shoes outside and enter into this school with brightly painted walls. These students started school for the first time November of 2014, having no educational opportunities or language prior to that. Mai and Hahn, their teachers, with God's help are teaching these children. They are learning to sign, to read and write, do math, art and learn life and character building skills. On the board is the math assignment – 4-digit addition problems, and long division problems…HOW did they learn this so quickly, in just over 12 months of schooling?

God!!! It was amazing to watch them using their fingers like an abacus. It was beautiful to watch the more advanced students peer-teaching those who need additional help. They have come together and become a team...a family within these walls. We were so thankful to be able to enter this school, started by Orphan Voice and get to know these children and their teachers. We loved being able to bring some surprises - markers, scissors, crayons, pipe cleaners, watercolors and lead them with some games and art projects. It was a wonderful opportunity and it was pure JOY for all of us! We look forward to continuing our relationship with the teachers and Orphan Voice as we share teaching experiences with each other in the years to come.

Heart-Adoption Opportunity!!

Monthly sponsorships ($38 monthly) for these Deaf students in Vietnam will help encourage them and their hearing families as they continue to learn Vietnamese Sign Language together to improve their relationships in their homes and help pay for the monthly costs of running the New Beginnings School for the Deaf. New Beginnings is not a boarding school, it is a day school. Sponsorship and prayer for their two teachers is also needed, as both are believers and share that with their students without fear. Please click any of the pictures below to be linked to Deaf Child Hope International, one of our partner organizations, to begin sponsoring one of them, now. This is one of the ways Signs for Hope is helping preserve the families who have Deaf children whereby preventing more orphans.



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Signs for Hope ASL-Immersion Family Retreat

We need your prayers & your gifts & your hands, please!

This is a ONE-OF-A-KIND event!
Family focused! ASL focused! Christ focused! Deaf focused!

We are praying hard and working hard
to get everything set for this first-ever SFH family retreat!
Your prayers are coveted for every aspect of the weekend and for preparations.
Right now,pray specifically, more dads can join us than are registered!
They need to be with their family for this family retreat experience!

Some of our family's joining us for family retreat are shared below!

Some of you are sacrificing your time and your money to join us at this year's family retreat! Thank you! Others who do not even know any sign language are volunteering to do "whatever" we need before, during and after family retreat! Thank you! Some of you have already donated funds specifically for this year's family retreat! Thank you! Our monthly and annual donations will cover very little of the funds needed for family retreat. I am hosting Becky's World Bazaar in our home next week (April 29 & 30) to help raise some funds for family retreat. When I travel, I purchase treasures specifically to sell to support SFH for future trips and events. My goal for this event is $1,500 in sales.

Ask God to bring folks from all over our area and
for an opportunity to share Jesus' love with each one while they are here.

We are doing our best to lower the cost for each family by $100. Honestly, that is not enough for some. Be assured sacrifices are being made to come. When I say "every family" I am including the Deaf families coming to encourage, teach and hangout with the hearing families and their deaf and hearing children. We want to assign one Deaf Buddy to each of the Deaf adopted children.

Please pray God will provide the Deaf
folks He wants to be involved.

Some of our families need two rooms (adjoining), but only have funds to cover one. $297 covers an adjoining room for one of these families for the entire weekend, if you want to help with that need specifically.

My heart was deeply touched, yesterday, as I received an email response from one of our Deaf presenters. I told him we could scholarship him $100 to come and share. He told me, "If you need it for one of the families, let them have it." You have to realize this man is a Deaf evangelist so this comes from a willing and giving heart. He also shared; this will be a first for him, to share and hangout with the hearing family members of deaf children. Another one of our

Deaf families, dad is a Deaf pastor and mom home schools, desiring to attend is fundraising to come. They have begun receiving donations and are planning a yard sale next weekend. We have no idea what all God plans to do during this weekend family retreat; won't you consider partnering with us? If He touches your heart to pray, give, or join physically with us, please do so! Every prayer, every dollar and every extra pair of hands will be used and all for His glory!

We are also seeking Deaf leaders for each of our age groups, 1) young children 2) children 3) youth and 4) adults. Pray specifically God will provide each of these ASAP!

Please remember these are also adopted children, with trauma backgrounds and their need for feeling secure in unfamiliar surroundings, meeting new people, transitioning between activities and eating and sleeping well with minimal meltdowns are also specific prayer needs. For all our hearing family members, the ability to tolerate all the signing will be something we need to lift in prayer

Some of you like to know specifics, so here are some of them:

- **Your gift of $53** covers the cost of meals for one Deaf child for family retreat.
- **Your gift of $100** covers a scholarship for one of our families for family retreat.
- **Your gift of $150** covers crafts for family retreat.
- **Your gift of $175** covers Boating by all during one session, w/ lifeguard.
- **Your gift of $250** covers the cost for a special late afternoon event for moms and dads to be pampered, separately and without children (Shh! Don't tell them!)
- **Your gift of $275** covers the use of the outdoor Climbing Tower for 50 participants for one session, age 6 and older.
- **Your gift of $297** covers an additional (adjoining) room for large families.
- **Your gift of $400** covers the printing of special SFH family retreat t-shirts. We purchased t-shirts last year, for this event.
- ~~**Your gift of $520** covers the rental of two gas-powered golf carts to help transport families and staff quickly during the retreat.~~

SFH is an all-volunteer organization. None of your donations support salaries of anyone. Your donations are tax deductible. You can securely give any amount online here or you can mail a check to:
Signs for Hope,
PO Box 460, Fairview, NC 28730.

"You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."
~James 4:2-3

So often, we do not have because we do not ask. Will you join me in asking our all sufficient God to supply the funds for each family and support staff to attend this year's family retreat? Will you ask Him to supply the needed Deaf and additional support staff? Will you ask Him to prepare the hearts of all those who will be together, young and old? This will not be an easy time, but I pray it will be a time of learning, sharing, encouraging, identifying, with a sense of strengthened resolve to persevere when it is over. Will you ask Him to give me His peace as we move forward with this year's family retreat, planning, fundraising, recruiting, etc? This is way beyond my ability to pull-off, in every way, and I desperately need Him! Your prayers for family retreat will do far more than any of us can begin to imagine.

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.
James 5:16

From my heart to yours ...

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:2

I have a heaviness I want to share with you all. It is a bit mind-boggling to me, actually; the situation we/SFH is in. No, it is nothing illegal, nor is it something anyone would ever guess. It came about quite naturally and from a giving heart. I have learned a valuable lesson, however, which will limit this giving heart of mine in the future somewhat, especially when the end result impacts the lives of others negatively. Which I never dreamed would be the case.

I will not share the details because of the sensitivity, but please join Charles and me in asking God to take care of some things that really should not be. It places me in a very awkward situation with Brothers and Sisters, but pray that whatever my part is in resolving this, I will do so appropriately in love and it will not bring with it any collateral damage to our relationships. If you know me at all, you know how I hate confrontation and at times that can become sin. You know that verse in James, "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." Well, it can go both ways. If those involved do not do what is right, they too, are guilty of sin. That sin is not only against each other, but it is ultimately against God. Charles and I have been praying He would resolve all of this by April 30th. We will wait and pray until then to "do" anything more than we already have, but please ask God to work in hearts to accomplish what must be done as quickly as possible.

I have no doubt each of you is dealing with awkward situations either in your family, with friends, or co-workers. Awkward situations seem to be becoming the norm here in America, these days. God has allowed these things to come about to cause us to depend on Him even more. Let's make sure in our dependence on Him you and I ask Him to clearly show us our part, each and every time.

I do love you, but His love for you & me is extravagant!

Becky

PS. I want to thank Melissa Lloyd for her ongoing willingness to format our prayer letters for us. They always look amazing!