



**Maison Chance continues its support to Dak Nong
Social rehabilitation: the beginning of a new life
Visit of an orphanage in Dong Nai province**

My Dear Friends,

Last year has been memorable for me. Highlights included organizing the Maison Chance 20th Anniversary events in Saigon and abroad. I also wrote a book telling the story of our big family composed of the less fortunate people in Vietnam, the country where I have spent half of my life and have recently obtained citizenship.

This busy year, full of emotions, unfortunately ended with the announcement of the death of my Grandma Nelly. She was the person who represented my family and my home in the country where I was born.



20 years ago I started alone. Now thousands of you are supporting this project with me. It is through your sharing and generosity from all the corners of the world that Maison Chance can continue to offer its services to the most disadvantaged and develop new projects. Special thanks to those who continue to trust us even though many miles separate us.

Through the difficulties, I learned a lot about life and about myself too. I decided to take care of myself and not to sacrifice myself. So I started 2014 on a new foot, continuing to love others more than ever but also learning to love myself. Like you, I am only flesh and blood. I also need your understanding to continue the mission we began with confidence.

Thank you very much for your essential sharing.
Cheers,
Tim

The people interested in buying the French version of the book published for the 20th anniversary of Maison Chance can do it through our website or by contacting Maison Chance Switzerland, France or Canada.
The English and Vietnamese versions of the book should be published in 2014.

MAISON CHANCE CONTINUES TO HELP DISADVANTAGED PEOPLE OF DAK NONG PROVINCE

In recent years, in addition to assisting disabled people, orphans and underprivileged people in Saigon, Maison Chance has organized numerous trips to remote areas to distribute wheelchairs, functional equipments suitable for people with disabilities and advise their relatives on providing them daily support. During the trips, we realized that the region of Dak Nong province has a significant amount of people with disabilities and children in a difficult situation, who haven't received the help they need. After observing and analyzing the problems of the area, Maison Chance decided to provide remedies by building a social center that will help people of Dak Nong to overcome their barriers.



To prepare this project, we have taken several observing trips to Dak Nong province. On February 25, 2014, a group of 12 participants left Saigon, they were: Tim Aline, representative of Maison Chance Organization; Pham Hong Ky, adviser on administrative procedures; Hoang Le Manh Thang, architect; Nguyen Hung Trung, construction engineer; Maria Saegesser, sympathizer; McFreddy, photographer. Farmer by trade, he was also able to advise us in this area; Do Sy Vinh, coordinator. Young adults, beneficiaries of Maison Chance, also took part in the trip: Dinh Cong Duy, Nguyen Hoang Thuong and Ly Thi Bich Tram. Our group also included two volunteers: Marine Trévisan, occupational therapist and Madeleine Sadler, physical therapist. Although the ages of our participants were varied, we were all fueled by the spirits of doing goods for the society. After a long journey of several hundred kilometers on winding mountain roads, our group finally arrived in the district of Krong No, Dak Nong Province.



The 27th of February, we had a meeting with the authorities of Krong No district about the land given to Maison Chance. In this field, a new Maison Chance center will be built with houses specially adapted for people with mental disabilities. Spaces for breeding and agriculture will create activities for them as well as opportunities for vocational training and production.



On March 3rd, we had an appointment with Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngoc Le, who is the vice-president of the People's Committee of Dak Nong province in charge of culture and social affairs, as well as representatives of various concerned departments. While discussing about the different issues related to the agreement on the creation of a social center in Krong No district, we learned that there was still no such center in the province. In order to create opportunities for people to improve their living conditions, the authorities of the province prepared the transfer to Maison Chance of a 27,719 m² plot of land in the Village of Dak Sor (Krong No district) to build the first social center of the region that will offer services tailored to orphans and disabled people in difficult situations. There, they will find education, vocational training and job opportunities. So a part of happiness will be given back to the people and to society.



One of the members of our group was Maria Saegesser, who follows and makes the bridge between some donors of Maison Chance for 8 years. Maria mentioned that: “This was the first time I visited Vietnam, and I have experienced and shared the difficulties faced by people with disabilities. I am also better informed of the interest of the local authorities for the social center project and for other social activities of Maison Chance. The heartfelt collaboration between local authorities and Maison Chance inspires and motivates me to continue to support Maison Chance.”

In parallel with our discussions with the local authorities, we also continued our social survey in the region and distributed “xe lac” (kind of adapted tricycle) and therapeutic equipment for disabled people. We also revisited some of the people we helped during our previous trips. Dao Vinh Hien, one of our social workers, who arrived early to investigate, had identified 24 families that need help. As this trip was relatively short, we could only meet and help a dozen of them. Each family is in a different predicament and need the help of benevolent people. Meeting up with these families and spending time with them have allowed us to



better understand their many challenges including transportation problem. In addition to equipment donations, we also provided the families with therapeutic advices, so they could take better care of their disabled parent.

We found the people we previously helped in a good shape and living in better conditions, like Mr. Van Phu Bup. Bup is hemiplegic because of a stroke. After the accident, he could only lie down on his bed and barely move. During a previous visit about a year and a half ago, we offered him a wheelchair and showed simple physical therapy exercises. During this second visit, we were very surprised to find him in a very good shape, both morally and physically. In addition, he doesn’t sit in his wheelchair but uses it as a walker. Seeing this, we exchanged the wheelchair for a real walker so his walking exercises will be more effective. We also gave him a “xe lac” so that he can expand his living space and have more opportunities to meet his neighbors. The specificity of this trip was that, for the first time, we met families living in remote areas of Dak Nong province. These zones are poor and the disabilities are heavy.



All the participants were satisfied with the work done and the help given. The meaningful purpose behind this activity provides further motivation to carry out this project, despite the many obstacles.

During our previous trips to Dak Nong, we met Chung, a 23 year-old man disabled since childhood as a result of a Japanese encephalitis. Only one of his four members is working: his right arm. Four years ago, his mother began to be sick and his father left home, leaving them to their fate. Since that day, Chung lived alone with his mother. Lack of money to buy proper medication and the care of Chung didn't allow his mother to recover and she died in October. Chung remained alone in the house. It is why we decided to welcome him.

Chung is now entirely a beneficiary of Maison Chance. The morning of his arrival at the shelter, Chung was welcomed into his new room by his three roommates. After recovering from the long trip, all the experiences of everyday life seemed to be new to him: to eat in a community, look in the mirror, take care of himself, and get around alone. Despite these differences, his large smile brings joy to everyone around him. The language barrier is not a problem for Chung who can communicate easily with foreign volunteers and knows what he likes or wants to do. He enjoys working in the treatment room allowing him to grow day by day. He likes to learn to do things alone. Today, Chung seems to appreciate his independence while also enjoying the support of his companions.

PHYSICAL REHABILITATION AT MAISON CHANCE

Elisabeth Sabarros Favre (physical therapist) and Marine Trévisan (occupational therapist) had been volunteers at Maison Chance from October 2013 to April 2014. Here is their testimony.

We are physical and occupational therapists volunteering at Maison Chance. We worked for several months with disabled people and in collaboration with the health care team composed of three therapists, a nurse, a pharmacist and two caregivers. We could take care of patients at the shelter or in the village, but primarily performed therapy at the Take Wing Center. In addition, we were living with the patients on a daily basis which had promoted adaptable support and led us to the heart of rehabilitation.

We arrived at Maison Chance in mid-October. Our first sessions in the therapy room were under the sign of the observation and the difference. Not only was the language different but also the skills and habits. But slowly we managed to find our bearings. We got to know each other and could have exchanges regarding our professional practices.

We had met two beneficiaries who recently arrived at the shelter. They had both made significant progress over time.

Sang is 20 years old and arrived at Maison Chance after an electric shock in November 2012. He lost both upper limbs and suffered burns in the lower limbs. He is now in a wheelchair and has to relearn all the activities of daily life. He has daily physical therapy sessions and occupational therapy sessions three times a week. We mainly worked on the flexibility of the burned skin, balance, standing and the use of his feet to take objects. When we first met, he was walking with difficulty and only inside the Take Wing Center. But before we left, he was walking more easily and could almost walk alone from the shelter in the morning. Sang is a motivated, smiling and persevering young man. He likes to learn and share with others. He is learning to paint with his mouth.

Thanh is 30 years old and arrived at Maison Chance at the end of August 2013 after spending a year in the hospital. He had a motorcycle accident in 2012 that resulted in a C5-C6 tetraplegia. After some difficulties at the beginning, Thanh has quickly made his mark at Maison Chance both in terms of rehabilitation and on a personal level. Despite his difficulties, he works a lot and we can note significant progress. Now he is autonomous and independent for all activities of daily life. He has plans to join the painting workshop, which is why every day he learned drawing from his comrades.

Through these two examples, we wished to emphasize that all the people with disabilities at Maison Chance want to be as independent and autonomous as possible and are doing their best to succeed.



CREATIVITY CONTEST AT THE SEWING WORKSHOP

In October 2013, Maison Chance organized the first creative contest for the members of the sewing workshop in partnership with Maison Song. This competition was a great opportunity for our designers to give free rein to their imagination and creativity, improve their skills and share their experiences.

A total of 16 designs were submitted to the organizing committee. They were exposed at the Take Wing Center and at Maison Song in the city center and subject to a public vote. At the same time, people could also choose their favorite product on Facebook.



Finally, the ballots were counted and we determined our four lucky winners. The prize ceremony took place at the Take Wing Center in the sewing workshop, attended by the sewers, their teacher, a representative of Maison Song and a representative of Maison Chance. Although it was expected that only the first four winners would receive a gift, because of the quality of the creations, the organizing committee decided to give incentive awards to other participants. The winning products are now part of the Maison Chance product catalog.

Congratulations to our winners !

1st and 3rd prizes

2nd prize

4th prize



Ngô Công Khanh



Trần Thị Trinh



Ma Van Hung

RESULTS OF OUR PHOTO CONTEST: « LOVE IS OUR FOCUS, NO BARRIER BETWEEN US »

A big thank you to the 154 participants for the beautiful photos you sent us!
More than 40% of the pictures have been sent by Indian artists.
Our jury had a hard time deciding but in the end he chose two shots from that country.

1

First prize:
«A Touch of Love»
from Pranab Basak



2

Second prize:
«My Mother» from
Pasupula Sreesailam



Congratulations to these two photographers.
Maison Chance is happy to have shared with you the message:
« Love is our focus, no barrier between us ».

Reintegration of the beneficiaries is the ultimate goal of Maison Chance. Every activity we undertake aims to help them become as independent as possible. Since July 2013, six beneficiaries have taken the plunge. Portraits.

Hai and Thuong are both orphans. Thuong arrived at Maison Chance in 1997, Hai in 2005. Like many other children welcomed by the association, Maison Chance became their home and Tim their mother. Hai has never known his parents while Thuong had an adoptive mother but not much maternal love.

Thuong and Hai have a common passion, cooking. So together they studied this art through an NGO that provides training in the field of catering to disadvantaged youth. Both graduated in July 2013.

Thuong's speciality is European cuisine. At school, he had the opportunity to develop his creativity. He loves to combine foods and try new recipes. He also likes to carefully present his dishes to impress those who taste them. Thuong is now the manager of our bakery workshop.

After graduating, Hai had only one idea in mind: to return to Maison Chance and use his skills to serve his disabled brothers and sisters.



Once the project to open a restaurant in the Village Chance was born, Hai was the first who wanted to participate.

Hai is a hard worker and always has a smile. Regarding his new independent life, Hai is realistic and knows that it will not be easy. His dream was to open his own restaurant. It became a reality: Hai is now the manager and chef of the Village Chance restaurant.



Tien is disabled as a result of a traffic accident. He was in a cart that overturned and fell on him, leaving him a paraplegic. Tien has been living at Maison Chance since 2006 and works in the painting workshop at the Take Wing Center.

Tien is a jovial fellow. He's spontaneous, open to others and a lover of communication. His paintings reflect his character. He paints spontaneously, straight out of his imagination with spirituality and an unwavering optimism.

Deciding to become independent was not an easy decision for Tien. He is suffering from a severe paraplegia which causes significant problems similar to quadriplegia such as balance disorders. However, this decision was essential to his future. He is now more responsible and works more seriously in order to take care of himself.



Thanh Tuyen, Bich Tuyen and Luong have something in common: one of their relatives is disabled. Sometimes a whole family arrives at Maison Chance: a parent with children, or a youth with his brother or sister. If the situation requires it, we welcome them all, as is the case for these three.

Thanh Tuyen arrived at Maison Chance in 1998 with her mother and her older brother. Both are suffering from a degenerative disease of muscle mass, but not Thanh Tuyen. For now, she is in perfect health. Thanh Tuyen quickly realized she had to learn a trade to ensure her future. She took advantage of the opening of the bakery at the Village Chance to begin vocational training in this area.

She is now a full-time employee of the bakery and her future is assured as well as the future of her mother and her brother. All three live in an adapted apartment at the Village Chance.



Just like Thanh Tuyen, Bich Tuyen arrived at Maison Chance with her father and her three sisters in 1996 when she was only two years old. Her father became paraplegic when the cart he was repairing fell on him. After studying accounting, she worked for a time at the restaurant of the Village Chance. This experience allowed her to practice her job in accounting.

Bich Tuyen is now ready to take off and start her new life as a young woman. She will soon marry another former disabled beneficiary of Maison Chance.

Luong arrived at Maison Chance in 2006 with his older brother who is quadriplegic as a result of a traffic accident. As they come from a poor family, we decided to help them both.

Luong has wanted to help his family to improve its daily life since childhood. That is why he has always been a good student. His dream was to become a teacher. With the support of Maison Chance, he was able to go to university and become a history teacher. When the head of the Village Chance school needed help, it fell to Luong. He was trained to be a principal and is now her assistant.

Luong is one of the youths the association assisted who later decided to return to invest in the future of Maison Chance.



THE CHILDREN OF MAISON CHANCE VISIT AN ORPHANAGE IN DONG NAI

In 2013, Maison Chance decided to set up a program of social discovery for the children providing with free schooling at the Village Chance. After visiting the Museum of Vietnamese History and the zoo, the pupils had the opportunity to meet the orphans and disabled people of the Lang Tre pagoda in the city of Cam My, Dong Nai province. The purpose of this trip was to show the students, who are living in difficult situations, that some of their contemporaries are worse-off than they are.



Located a hundred kilometers from Saigon, the journey took almost four hours and we had to take a bumpy road in a forest of rubber trees to cover the last 15 kilometers. The Lang Tre pagoda was founded by the monk Thich Chieu Bon in 2007 and is situated near an isolated hill surrounded by rubber trees. We entered the building and went through a series of rooms, each dedicated to a different type of beneficiary: people with cerebral palsy, infants, old people and people with disabilities. This center is like a big family which includes three generations: children, young and old people.

The atmosphere is calm and the air is pure but the center has no electricity because of its distance from the road. There is a tiny generator that is used sparingly. Seeing this, the pupils were able to measure the difficulties of this place. Although they are not rich and need support to go to school, they never imagined that people can live in such poverty. Some children are the same age but their bodies are deformed by disease, babies are left to the center's care and the seniors are sad and miss their families.



Our students realized how lucky they were to have a family, good health and the opportunity to go to school. Giving is receiving – what a meaningful expression! The children gave small presents and received words of gratitude, happy smiles, and handshakes full of love. The people of the pagoda thanked us warmly and invited us to share a vegetarian meal.

We then rested a little before the start of a small presentation. The children of the pagoda laughed loudly watching the comedy of the children of Maison Chance. The seniors were moved listening to songs about parental love.

This trip to Lang Tre pagoda was very interesting and meaningful for the students of Maison Chance as well as for the adults who did not know this warm center.

We wish good health to everyone and hope that the center will soon have access to electricity and can expand to help even more people in need. Thanks to this trip, our students were able to understand the difficult life of the beneficiaries of the center and learned to share, empathize and appreciate the few comforts they have. When the time to go home arrived, we all went on the buses but our eyes and our feelings were already nostalgic of the beautiful encounters we made...



MAISON CHANCE CELEBRATES THE TÊT!

The period of the Lunar New Year is an opportunity for families to get together and spend time together. At Maison Chance, those who can return home. The others stay at the shelter with their new family. This is the case of Lam who shared his impressions of this period.

The last days before Tet, we formed a string of wheelchairs through the busy streets to go to the market and make our final purchases. The penultimate day of the year we help to tidy and clean the shelter from top to bottom. The next day, the orphans decorate the doors and walls with yellow paper flowers, the color of spring. The disabled people care for real flowers and leave offerings on the altar of the ancestors. It is a nostalgic period for those of us who cannot go home but the solidarity that unites us softens our pain.

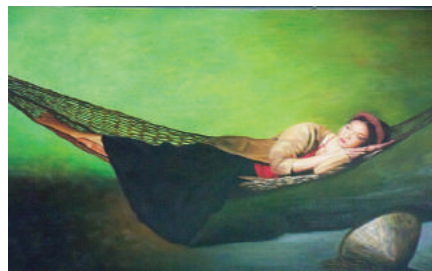
Waiting for the transition to the New Year, we gather around a multitude of traditional dishes and we talk about the 12 months that have just passed. When midnight arrives, we embrace and exchange greetings for the New Year. Everyone has the right to choose a red envelope containing some money that had previously been hung on the Tet tree. Children giggle impatiently awaiting their turn. Joy can be read on all faces.

Happy Year of the Horse to all of you!

THE PRODUCTS OF MAISON CHANCE



Happy New Year
of the Horse!



The artists of our painting workshop can reproduce your pictures. You just have to send us an email with the picture you would like to reproduce.



If you have questions or want to place an order, use our email address:
shop@maison-chance.org!



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P.B. Dye's masterpiece signature course!



P.B. Dye's masterpiece signature course!

Maison Chance USA is pleased to invite you to our 4th annual fundraising golf outing. Come join MC Cup IV at the renowned PB Dye Golf Course on Sunday June 22, 2014. Come join us to give back and to make some great golf & fun memories!!

Format: 2-Person Team Better Ball Event, Sunday 12:00PM Shotgun
Entry fee of \$130 per person to include:

- 18 Holes, cart, and range balls
- Many team and individual trophies and prizes
- Brunch, dinner, drink, and music
- Activities and exhibition of handicrafts by people of MCVN

Registrations due by June 7, 2014 - for info please contact MCUSA at teamusa@maison-chance.org.

Sponsorship is the key for us to continue this annual event; we appreciate if you can help!

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