

Dak Nong Reportage

A photograph of a construction site in Dak Nong. The scene shows a dirt path between newly built houses. On the left, a house is under construction with blue walls and scaffolding. On the right, a house with bright yellow walls and a red roof is completed. A person wearing a conical hat and a patterned shirt is pushing a wheelbarrow along the path. In the background, a yellow tractor is parked near another house. The sky is overcast.

**The mechanics
A help for Autism!
Dance with the Stars
New beneficiaries
Coasters for the dog's year**

Happy New Year to all friends of Maison Chance!

*May this new year 2018 bring you health, joy and luck.
May your wildest dreams come true!*

I celebrated the New Year at Village Chance with all the members of our big family, but this year there was a special guest, my brother Vincent, who had not returned to Vietnam for 22 years. From the end of 1994 to the end of 1995 he stayed with me and helped to take care of the first beneficiaries of Maison Chance. At the time we only had a small house for the street children, located just in front was a straw-roofed cabin where the paralyzed were housed. Vincent gave drawing lessons to the children and played billiards with them. He was also caring for the paralyzed, cleaning their bedsores, helping them take a shower, bringing them food and drinks. He would also visit the hospitals where some of our patients were accommodated.

We had together found a little orphan named Quang, begging in Hué and brought him back to Saigon. Vincent reconnected with Quang 22 years later, the latter is married and has two children. He opened a small restaurant of seafood and grilled fish.

Minh was one of the paraplegic patients whose deep sores Vincent helped clean. Today they met up, Minh is in great shape, and operates a small hat business with his wife. They have two children and the oldest is named «Vinh», the Vietnamese nickname of my brother Vincent. We were all very moved by this reunion. Vincent was impressed by the evolution of Maison Chance, and I was so happy to share with my deaf brother all the things that I have built so that the less fortunate could find a footing and a chance to enjoy life again.

2017 was for me a busy year occupied by much traveling to find the necessary funds for the construction of the Social Center in the highlands. The project has grown, and with 100 residents planned, we have decided to make 150 more places to accommodate poor minority school children. They live too far away for daily commutes by cars.

At the end of 2017, nearly 70% of the project was completed, we will proceed in stages and welcome the first 25 beneficiaries at the end of the first fimester of 2018. The targeted investment for the project was 2,500,000 US dollars, and we already have 2 million, we'll make it!



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Concerning the accounting of 2017, I would like to share with you the following numbers: Our expenses in Saigon amounted to \$689,571 against earnings of \$710,389. This year \$1,699,121 will be allocated to the new center, and the operating budget for Saigon will be \$752,793, for a total budget (for Dak Nong and Saigon) of \$ 2,451,914 in 2018.

Thank you for your invaluable support during the year of 2017 and I look forward to doing beautiful things with you in 2018.

Please accept my best thoughts,

Tim

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Overcoming your disability and having a new look at the world!

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*It's Hai,
The chef of the bakery, who is in charge
of wishing you, with a smile, "Hello
from Maison Chance!"*

Mechanics, the key of success

Fingers get dirty!



Thuấn, Thiện, Nhật, Triết, and Non the fifth mechanic, shown in the photo, lower right.

Maison Chance receives wheelchairs from all over the world. Used daily by the beneficiaries, they end up being damaged. Although out of order,

these precious gifts are not thrown away. We recycle! They are sent to the repair shop. This is where our five fellows intervene.

Thiện, Non and **Nhật** are full-time repairers and are responsible for the Shelter, Take Wing Center and Village Chance, respectively.



Triết and **Thuấn** are both drivers and repairers. Real mechanical engineers with an overflowing imagination, they dismantle, saw, weld and assemble old vehicle parts together to create new ones. The needs are important since many beneficiaries have several wheelchairs or adapted vehicles.



Please help, they said!

An abundance of volunteers

Maison Chance has always welcomed with open arms many volunteers from all over the world: India, Switzerland, New Zealand, Belgium, the USA, France, Japan, Canada, Australia, Germany and Italy!

Today, volunteering is a real fashion phenomenon and the number of volunteers continues to grow. Everyone's motivations vary: helping others, discovering another culture, gaining professional experience, getting out of their com-

fort zone, traveling, opening up to others, learning a new language...

The success of humanitarian experiences simply comes from the benefits they provide. Giving is a source of joy. Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote on a beautiful day: «Do you want to be happy? Give happiness!»

Until the end of 2017, 17 volunteers live the Maison Chance experience.

Anne-Cécile



Occupational therapist, French from Burgundy
Internship: 3 months
Like: Bathing and learning Vietnamese

Tom



Physiotherapist, Belgian from Brussels
Duration of volunteering: 6 months
Like: Beer and playing the guitar

Abhishek



English teacher, Indian from Mumbai
Duration of volunteering: 4 months
Like: Traveling and working with children

Elisabeth



Physiotherapist, French from Bayonne
Duration of volunteering: 3 months
Like: Reading and music

Kai



Communication Officer, Anglo-Japanese from Bordeaux
Duration of volunteering: 6 months
Like: Reading novels and traveling

Eugénie



Occupational Therapist, French from Bourges
Duration of volunteering: 2 months
Like: Badminton and cooking

Lâm, in the teacher's chair

The husband, the poet and the teacher

Lâm arrived at Maison Chance in February 2006, he was 21 years old and had been in an accident in November 2004. From being a young student full of health and future promises he became tetraplegic, unable to sit alone on his bed, or to get out of his wheelchair without the help of a third party. He was taken in charge by our medical department of physiotherapy, then, with many health problems, **Lâm** managed to complete a training course in computer science.

For two years he has been the computer teacher of the Village Chance school and can count up to 198 students! In January 2014 **Lâm** met the woman of his life, and they were married in September 2016. Since then, the couple lives in a converted apartment at Village Chance. **Lâm** is also a romantic poet, author of two books of poems released in 2010 and 2013. He writes love letters daily to his wife (and on Facebook as well!).



Lâm's philosophy

In life one must accept pains and overcome them. Happiness comes when you know how to share your love of life with others.



New beneficiaries

Four new handicapped members of Maison Chance



NGUYEN QUOC DUNG

Dung came to the world 30 years ago in Long An Province. At the age of 24, he worked at Aluminum Window Company. One day, an accident occurred at a construction site. As a result of spinal cord injuries, his lower limbs were paralyzed. Despite his disability, he wanted to work and above all, did not want to worry his elderly parents. He is currently training in sewing as a profession.



DO TRONG HIEU

Hieu is from Ben Tre. A road accident deprived him of the use of his lower limbs at 21 years old. Today, **Hieu** is 27 years old and longs for a good job for self-sustenance. To achieve his goal, he is currently training in computer science with the teachers of Maison Chance.



TRAN VAN HUYNH

Huynh was born on September 12, 1989 in Thoi Lai in the province of Can Tho. His lower limbs were paralyzed as a result of a motorcycle accident on his way to school in 2009. He is currently training in sewing at Maison Chance. His goal is to become independent, and no longer have to depend on the association.

Beneficiaries are accepted at Maison Chance following an application and interviews with social workers.

Maison Chance assesses their needs in terms of care and education to establish a contract.

NGUYEN TRUNG TINH

Tinh was born on August 10, 1984 in An Giang. At the age of 18, during the night, his somnambulism makes him fall from a betel palm tree. His spinal cord was affected so, since his accident, he is in a wheelchair and his movements are limited. At the Training Center, he chose to dedicate himself to the semi-precious stone workshop.



What is the pool for?

Aquatherapy and more



Eugénie with a CMD child



View of the pool at Village Chance



Stork used to shuttle the paralyzed in and out of the pool

What is the pool for? This is a question we can easily ask ourselves. Specially designed for aquatherapy, the pool at Village Chance is equipped with a ramp and a hoist to easily transfer the beneficiaries into the water. These therapies are a boon for people with disabilities who are then released from the weight of their bodies. This lightness allows them to perform additional exercises to their daily care. The pool is also for children.

The temperature of the water is around 30 Celsius degrees. The heat relaxes the nervous system and reduces muscle spasticity and stiffness.

All students at the school learn how to swim. In a country where a lot of people do not know how to swim and where drowning deaths are a common occurrence, it is a real asset.

To mix business with pleasure, the pool is open to all members of Maison Chance, more than 500 people, including volunteers, visitors and residents of the Village.



Warming up before the school children's swimming class



Thu, the physiotherapist with a disabled patient in the water



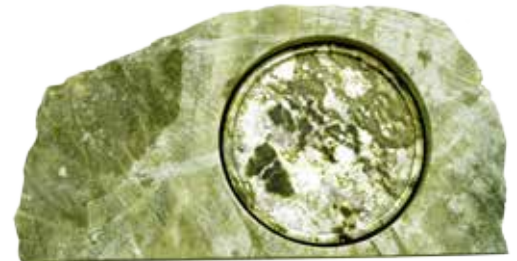
Therapy in the water at Village Chance

The stone under the glass

Coasters for the year of the Dog



The coasters were carved in serpentine, a pretty olive-colored stone from northern Vietnam. The rough stone is split into large blocks by a saw. Circles are cut into the serpentine blocks using a bell-shaped hole saw. These circles are then hollowed out a few millimeters before being refined, sanded and polished.



The workshop of semi-precious stone fabrication was inaugurated in 2016 and our beneficiaries did not waste any time learning this new craft.

Some work there until late at night, especially when large orders are to be delivered. Roche Diagnostics Vietnam, our partner for ten years now, has ordered 1000 sets of 6 coasters as gifts for its partners during Tet celebrations.

Production was increased. Employees relentlessly fabricated coasters for several weeks to finalize the order before the start of the year of the Dog. These beautiful coasters are presented in pretty boxes of bamboo produced by the woodwork workshop.



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Dak Nong

Seminar on organic farming

In December 2017, the weather in Dak Nong was cold, but the enthusiasm of agricultural engineers and guests quickly warmed the atmosphere. Maison Chance organized a seminar on organic farming, with the aim of setting up an agricultural production project sufficient to feed nearly 300 people at its future Social Center.

In the early morning, the construction supervisor led the delegation

for a site visit. The group stopped for a long time at the one-hectare lot reserved for cultivation and breeding to study the land, the plants and the environment. The information gathered formed the basis for discussions of the best options for organic farming during the seminar at Maison Chance.

The seminar started with presentations by the participants. Agricultural specialists, local employees, **Tim** and Maison Chance staff were all present for the discussions.

Many passionate ideas were offered by the experts on how to best utilize the 1-hectare lot, which in the future could be extended up to 10 hectares. Among many proposals were the agricultural models favoring the participation of the handicapped, high yield cultivation of vanilla based on substrate of coconut fibers, aquaponic cultures, greenhouse cultivation and even the installation of an irrigation system for water conservation.

The seminar lasted all morning before ending with the thank you remarks by **Tim**. Nevertheless, several additional consultations will still be necessary for Maison Chance to choose the most effective project for the establishment of its organic farm.





*Group photo of the participants of the agricultural seminar, and below, **Tim** during her presentation in front of the same very attentive audience.*



The meeting and the seminar took place inside the house built in the style of ethnic minorities.

Site Visit

In 2017, thanks to fundraising efforts, many associations and companies were informed about the construction project for the Maison Chance Social Center in Dak Nong.

A large number of associations have donated funds to Maison Chance. Among the many donors were also celebrities like **Nguyen Cao Ky Duyen**, **Thanh Bach** and **Quy Binh**. This is how the site was activated.

During the first months, the stilt house inspired by the architecture of the ethnic minority Êdê, was built. It will serve as accommodation for volunteers and can accommodate twenty people in the common room. The house has a large terrace, a ramp for wheelchair users as well as four beautiful, spacious and specially fitted bathrooms. Behind the house, a row of

pens for raising animals has been installed. To date, more than 50 hens are raised there. The site will soon welcome goats, horses and dogs. These animals will participate in pet therapy for patients with physical and mental disabilities.

In mid-2017, the elements around the heart-shaped basin were built. The first two homes for disabled people with roofs covered with imitation red tiles were completed. And we can see around the playground, the school funded by La Bonne Etoile, the association of **Laeticia Hallyday**. The professional training workshops are next. The cafeteria will be able to accommodate more than 300 people. The Dak Lak construction company took part in the realization of the center from the first days and was greatly

attentive to details. Each classroom was painted a different color, each house was cared for in every detail.

Work accelerated at the end of the year with the construction of the water tower. In front of it, the main gate, the guard station and the coffee-shop were also being built, as well as the medical centers and various office buildings.







Tim in front of the homes of the future beneficiaries



The coffee shop under construction, next to the water tower. The products made by the beneficiaries in the various workshops will be exhibited and put on sale. The coffee shop will also be open to visitors throughout the day to offer drinks and sweet and savory snacks.



The guard's lodge at the entrance of the Social Center will be furnished with a desk with a control screen. The main electrical panel will also be located therein. The walls of the enclosure and the guard's lodge are in orange-colored brickwork. The center will be guarded 24/7 to ensure maximum security.



Tim and Thanh Bach on the water tower

The Water Tower

The work on the Maison Chance Social Center accelerated towards the end of 2017, especially with the construction of a water tower. The water tower is 20 meters high, with 3 floors and hold 20 thousand liters of water!

On the upper floor is an observation deck, which offers a beautiful panoramic view of the site. The water tower will supply the entire center with running water.



*View of the future playground and school funded by La Bonne Etoile, the association of **Laeticia Hallyday**.*



The future beneficiaries of Dak Nong

Field visits



The highlands where the various ethnic minorities live

The region is beautiful and green but does not yet have a large-scale Social Center to take care of the disadvantaged. The opening of the Maison Chance Social Center is thus eagerly awaited. During her many visits, **Tim** met the unfortunate people in the area who were heavily affected by Agent Orange. Some of them already have their place waiting for them at the Social Center.



Nghia and **Thao** are brother and sister. They are respectively 14 and 9 years old. They were both born disabled with CMD (Cerebral Motor Deficiency). At Maison Chance, they will have social contacts, their motor functions will be stimulated and result in an intellectual awakening. These exercises will allow them to be more autonomous.



The weak lower limbs of little **Ha** (Ha is of the Nung minority) prevent her from moving alone. She does not go to school and her little sister takes care of her at home. **Ha** can control some of her muscles and with physiotherapy sessions, her walking functions could be improved. On the left, our companion, the famous **Thanh Bach**, shares a moment of tenderness with her.



Chien has Sotos syndrome, a tumor in the brain and another on the back. The daughter of his ex-partner, whom he has adopted, is called **Hien**. She is in a wheelchair. Being aware of her environment and a little fluent in speech, she will soon be able to join Maison Chance school.



H'Gieng Cu is 24 years old (Minority M'Nong). Her legs were malformed and the sitting position causes her pain. She stays lying down all day long. Physiotherapy sessions would allow her to progressively use a wheelchair to move alone and to go to school.



These minorities live without comfort with meager resources from coffee production or livestock. The houses, often on stilts by tradition, are really country style. The partitions are simple wooden planks, open plan for the most part. The animals roam freely around the houses. Imagine winter conditions or rainy days.



The malformation of **Y Tung** (Minority M'Nong) led him to street begging at a very young age to survive. He is now more than 30 years old and wants to learn a trade at Maison Chance to make a decent living.



Dance with the Stars

They support Tim's actions

The first charity event ever held in Vietnam took place in Can Tho last September. The support and notoriety of Vietnamese celebrities have enabled Maison Chance to launch this fundraising initiative. MC **Thanh Bach** and Mrs **Thuy Nga**, «Paris By Night» Director, two popular and colorful characters, organized the evening with great success. Thanks to them and the generous donors, more than \$10,000 was raised for Maison Chance's many projects.



Tim and Thanh Bach



A few weeks later, MC **Thanh Bach** was back with us at Ho Chi Minh Village Chance to host the Mid-Autumn Festival, a special day for children. The numerous donors and volunteer artists made the faces of our students shine by offering them a party full of magic and shows. In December, **Thanh Bach** traveled this time to Dak Nong with Tim to attend the seminar on the construction of the agricultural and organic farm of the new Maison Chance Social Center. Other Vietnamese celebrities have lent their support by hosting various events. MC, actor and singer

Quy Binh was present for the release of **Tim's** book in Saigon and Hanoi. He has also accompanied her twice to England, with singers **Lam Ngoc Hoa** and **Bang Cuong** at charity galas. These same three personalities sang for the students of Village Chance during the prize presentation ceremony for a drawing competition. Bathed in the light of the stars, Maison Chance appears in the eyes of a growing Vietnamese public.



The actor **Doan Thanh Tai** was elected Mister Vietnam, he organized for the occasion an evening in Saigon where he invited us to auction two paintings made by the disabled at Maison Chance. The sales grossed 110 million dong.

*Singers **Bang Cuong**, **Lam Ngoc Hoa**, and **Quy Binh***



Tim's book in Vietnamese

An immediate success

In 2013, **Tim** wrote in French the book «Maison Chance, a future for the less fortunate in Vietnam». Half of the book tells her personal story and that of Maison Chance, which are today inseparable. The other half delivers testimonials from 16 beneficiaries, because the story of Maison Chance is also their story. To reach a wider audience, **Tim** translated her book into Vietnamese.



It was reissued with new testimonials and reprinted, before being published in Saigon on August 16, 2017.

The reception organized for the book release was a great success. The hall was packed and more than \$20,000 was raised, quite unexpectedly, thanks to an anonymous donor.

Following the success of the first event, the book release was celebrated in Hanoi in September.

What a surprise when, the same day, the TV channel VTV1 invited **Tim** to share her story live during their afternoon show!

Tim wants to share her message of love with the largest possible audience. She's currently working on the English translation of her book.



Messenger of hope

Charity without borders



Canada, Montreal, June 2017

Tim and Jean Pierre Desrosiers

From back Ms. Thi Be the organizer of the gala



Canada, Toronto, June 2017

Maison Chance Organizing Committee



France, Paris, May 2017

Tim, the singer Le Thu and at the microphone «Rose» Le Ngoc Van Hong who is a supporter of our association

Tim often travels to the various international communities of Maison Chance to raise funds to care for people with disabilities and orphans in Vietnam. She had to redouble her efforts this year to find funding to finalize the construction of the Dak Nong project. There is little time left before the opening of the new Social Center. Various adjustments and unforeseen events have inflated the total budget needed to achieve the goals.

As a result, **Tim** participated in a multitude of charity events in Vietnam, Canada and Europe between April and December.

This international tour was successful and helped raise funds through generous donors and support from Vietnamese organizing committees and celebrities.



Norway, Oslo, September 2017

Tim, at a gala in honor of Maison Chance

A gala in Manchester, England: Bang Cuong, Nguyen Cao Ky Duyen, Tim, Lam Ngoc Hoa and Quy Binh



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The games of hope

Heal the mental handicap

For the past year, Maison Chance has been welcoming children with autism spectrum disorders at its center in Ho Chi Minh, the condition is characterized by difficulties in communicating and integrating socially. There are about ten of them from 3 to 17 years old. They are divided into different classes of the school to follow a classical school curriculum with other children.

Daily and individual sessions are organized with the specialized educator **Thanh Hoa**, the occupational therapists and physiotherapist volunteers. These sessions require special attention because personalized activities are put in place, according to each person's troubles, to enable them to gain autonomy and develop communication habits.

In order to capture the attention of children, who often have trouble concentrating, exercises are presented in the form of games: throwing balls, coloring, DIY, origami ... Creativity is essential to stimulate the senses and learn in a fun way.

Maison Chance plans to accommodate more children with autism or mental disorders in the Social Center that will soon open in Dak Nong.



Where it all began

A visit to Thu Duc

At the end of December, Maison Chance members visited the patients of the Thu Duc psychiatric hospital in Sai Gon. That was where **Tim** met **Thanh** in 1993, the first child of Maison Chance. For her, these places evoke strong moments and will remain forever etched in her memory and in her heart.

The clinic, shaded by tall trees, is home to nearly 1300 patients from all over the country. Patients are divided according to their age, sex and pathology. Some patients have mental disorders and in addition they carry diseases such as tubercu-

losis or HIV.

Since the day **Tim** collected **Thanh** from Thu Duc's home, Maison Chance goes there each year to visit and support patients.

This year, **Tim**, her brother, **Vincent**, visiting Vietnam and the members of Maison Chance came with a gift per patient, or 1300 gifts. Homemade cakes made by the Village Chance bakery and a blue T-shirt, color of hope, were offered to everyone. With a smile on her face, the visit ended with songs started in her heart and the promise to return next year.



Tim, Thanh and Dr Son, in service since 1993, first time Tim has visited this psychiatric hospital.





Maison Chance

wish you all a very Happy New Year of the dog!



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Yes to the effort,
try too.

If you want,
you can.

Maison Chance
Vietnam