



maisonchance

CULTIVATING “NEW BLACK GOLD” IN DAK NONG

WEDDING AT VILLAGE CHANCE

THE G4’S VISIT TO MAISON CHANCE



Children with developmental delays are very interested in participating in the animal-assisted therapy program.



TIM ALINE REBEAUD

Dear friends,
 Founder and Director of Maison Chance

I hope this letter finds you well and that you had a joyful holiday season. Although 2022 is coming to an end, Maison Chance continues to innovate and many novel initiatives have begun to take shape. Once we raise enough funds, they will be put into action in 2023. I write to you to inform you of these exciting new developments. First, after years of planning and collaboration with global agricultural experts, we finally broke ground on our pioneering vanilla farm project in Dak Nong. Given Dak Nong’s ideal climate for vanilla growth, we are optimistic that this project will provide substantial funds to support Maison Chance and increase its financial independence.

This project will also serve as a source of employment and economic growth for the region which is home to many impoverished ethnic minority groups. Second, plans are underway for the construction of The Music House at Maison Chance in Dak Nong. Many of the children and people with disabilities at the center are musically talented, but they lack the resources to reach their full potential. With this new initiative, they will be able to develop their abilities and use music as a way to express themselves. We also intend to construct a computer room, a baking training room, and a Snoezelen multi-sensory treatment room for the students. More information on these projects will be provided in the next issue.

Since the end of the pandemic, we still have been unable to organize fundraising activities in nations where Maison Chance is active, including Switzerland, France, and Belgium, as well as Canada, the United States, Australia, and Vietnam. Maison Chance will celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2023. I hope that we may all get together to celebrate the next chapter of Maison Chance by holding events around September and October of next year. On the occasion of the Year of the Cat 2023, I would like to wish all of our donors and supporters a happy, lucky, and fruitful new year.

Thank you very much for your generosity and solidarity.

Tim




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BA BONG & BICH DAO'S FAIRY TALE WEDDING AT VILLAGE CHANCE



They love each other sincerely and are determined to support one another to build life full of happiness. After four years of love and overcoming many difficulties, parents from both sides of the family finally gave their consent for them to marry.

On November 26, 2022, Ms. Tim hosted the fairy tale wedding at Village Chance. In the presence of their two families, all the beneficiaries at Maison Chance, and their close friends, Bong and Dao marked the beginning of their new life together. The wedding atmosphere was full of warmth and happiness for the newly married couple.

Bong and Dao's wishes have come true. Their wedding proves that true love is real, inspiring people with disabilities to seek love to build their own happiness. We wish Ba Bong and Bich Dao eternal health and a lifetime of peace, and we hope that they will receive good news soon.

Ba Bong was born and raised in Hai Duong. In his youth, Bong suffered from a series of unfortunate events. Bong's mother died when he was just 7 years old; afterwards, his father left him for another woman and did not return. Years later in 2007, Ba Bong was involved in a work accident in Ho Chi Minh City which resulted in a cervical spine injury and severe quadriplegia. After surgery, he stayed in the hospital for many months but could not recover.

Fortunately, he met Ms. Tim who offered him assistance and took him back to Maison Chance where he could receive care, vocational training, and physical therapy. Bong is a gentle, likable person who always gets along with everyone and lives a happy life. After years of hard work and unwavering determination to live an independent life, Bong now has a job and income to support himself. Then, love came to Bong unexpectedly.

On a beautiful day in 2018, a lovely girl named Bich Dao from Dong Thap Province visited Maison Chance. Fate brought Bong and Dao together, and from there, the two became friends. Their love for each other grew steadily in their hearts. Dao went to Maison Chance every evening after work to take care of Bong and talk together.



THE G4'S VISIT TO MAISON CHANCE

To prepare for the upcoming Year of the Cat 2023, ambassadors from G4 – Ambassador Shawn Steil of Canada, Madam Ambassador Tredene Dobson of New Zealand, Madam Ambassador Hilde Solbakken of Norway, and Madam Ambassador Nicole Wyrsh of Switzerland – visited Maison Chance to film a video and spread the message of “Tet of Solidarity» with the broader community.

The ambassadors gifted fruits, Banh Tet (cylindric glutinous rice cake), and red couplets upon their arrival, and they also participated in a lively game of basketball with Maison Chance's disabled beneficiaries. To create a level playing field and better understand the difficulties that disabled people face, the ambassadors used wheelchairs for the entire match. It is often said that a person without legs is like a ship without a rudder: it is easy to lose balance and everything slows down.

However, with skillful movements and wheelchairs as legs, disabled Maison Chance beneficiaries scored beautifully. Hundreds of people, both Maison Chance members and visi-



G4 Ambassadors, Tim and some staff of Maison Chance.

tors alike, roared and cheered. In the same circumstance, there might not be many disabled people who are self-assured enough to participate in such a basketball game.

Afterwards, the ambassadors attended the painting workshop where they saw artists working on Tet-themed paintings. The G4 group was impressed by the many stories of people overcoming adversity to continue living. Maison Chance members never give up enduring the harshness of life and are always determined to carve out a future for themselves.

As the G4 group neared the end of their visit, Ms. Tim invited the four ambassadors and everyone to enjoy traditional Vietnamese Tet dishes made by Maison Chance, such as biscuits, sunflower seeds, cashews, Macca, melon seeds, and jam. Ms. Tim then presented a video to the ambassadors explaining the story of how Maison Chance came to be.



Canadian Ambassador interacts with members of Maison Chance.



The G4 Ambassadors participated in the wheelchair basketball experience with the members of Maison Chance.

Even after watching the video, the ambassadors wanted Ms. Tim to tell them more about Maison Chance's history because they were so interested and admired the organization's efforts. However, due to the limited time she had with them, Ms. Tim signed and gave each ambassador a copy of the book she wrote detailing the establishment of Maison Chance. Before they left, the ambassadors supported Maison Chance by buying our products and giving lucky red envelopes. These are joyful times, moments that look modest but are difficult to obtain in this vast life.

The G4 group's visit to Maison Chance had special significance. At Maison Chance, beneficiaries embody the spirit of "down but not out," and the time that the ambassadors took to share in the lives of members helps spread the message of understanding and empathy. We hope that this message will spread beyond Maison Chance to the broader Vietnamese community and the world at large.

Let's wait to watch the video of the G4 group with Maison Chance, which will air during the upcoming Tet holiday.



The G4 Ambassadors are very excited about this sport.

THE RETURN OF VOLUNTEERS FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC

After two years of a global pandemic, Vietnam re-established normalcy and officially opened its doors to foreigners travelers and workers in May. Foreign volunteers have also begun to return to Maison Chance. They are young people who are not afraid of challenges and want to use their efforts to make a difference. Below are portraits of these young people.



Juliette Drouot, a young French student at Maison Chance Projects Office.

Juliette Drouot

Juliette Drouot is a young French student who was the first volunteer to come to Maison Chance three months after the pandemic. Juliette assisted Maison Chance as a French teacher and French translator at the Project Office.

Minh Nhat

Minh Nhat is a Vietnamese-American student who registered to volunteer for Maison Chance for six months working as an English teacher and assistant physical therapist at the Take Wing Center.



Minh Nhat is teaching English to preschool children at Village Chance.



Minh Tien experiences painting workshops to find fundraising ideas for Maison Chance.

Minh Tien

Minh Tien is an international student studying in Japan who has recently returned to Vietnam. He has come to Maison Chance to assist teaching English to the children.

Lan Anh

Lan Anh worked in banking for over 16 years. She decided to quit her job to make her life more meaningful by helping Maison Chance care for kindergarten children. She has been volunteering for three months and probably longer.



Lan Anh is helping to prepare Tet gift baskets at the Social Enterprise.



Johannes Speth preparing a dinner at the Shelter.

Johannes Speth

Johannes Speth is from Germany. He volunteered at Maison Chance as a kitchen assistant, assisting the chef in cooking and preparing meals for everyone and cleaning up after meals for three weeks.

Additionally, many groups of students and elderly people have been willing to volunteer to assist Maison Chance. The Solidup group, Romain Nguyen's group, and the final year major students from the Rennes Institute of Osteopathy - Bretagne (France) spent a week at the Take Wing Center and Village Chance to treat the disabled, children, and staff at the above two locations.

We are also very pleased to welcome the return of the Casira delegation after a long hiatus due to the Covid pandemic. This time, they directly participated in the construction of vegetable therapy tanks for the disabled, repaired the goat stables, and donated more than ten breeding goats for Maison Chance in Dak Nong. Not wanting to stop there, the group moved to Village Chance to repaint the walls and change the ceiling boarding in some of its apartments.

Paul Thirion is a young physiotherapist from France. With the desire to use his knowledge and experience to assist people with disabilities, he applied to be a volunteer at Maison Chance for three weeks. Although this article names our recent volunteers, many more have contributed to Maison Chance's story throughout the years.

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of our volunteers who have devoted their valuable time to advance Maison Chance's mission of assisting the most vulnerable members of Vietnamese society.



Paul is providing physical therapy exercises to members at the Take Wing Center.



Solid'Up student group.



Romain Nguyen and friends help to paint and clean classrooms at Village Chance.



A group of osteopathic physicians and students providing the therapy to the disabled at Maison Chance.



Frederique Jouffrey volunteers at Social Enterprise of Maison Chance.



Katerina, a volunteer, is teaching children in the Village Chance kindergarten to dance.



Seven and Katerina served as judges in the singing competition at Maison Chance.



Cheyenne, a Singaporean student came to help the Social Enterprise.



The Casira group participated in gardening with the agricultural team of Maison Chance Dak Nong.



The Casira group is setting up vegetable patches.



The Casira assists in the renovation of the beneficiary's apartments.



Nearly 200 gifts were also handed to Village Chance students and residents by the Casira.

RISING FROM THE BRINK OF DEATH



Tien before her arrival at Maison Chance Dak Nong.

We sometimes complain about how unfair life is when something doesn't go our way. However, for some people, life is not just unfair but also tragic. Such a case was recently received by Maison Chance Dak Nong.

Nguyen Thi Thuy Tien was born into a poor family with many siblings. In her childhood, she was not given the opportunity to attend school. Instead, she was expected to stay at home to do household chores.

Every household expense was a strain on the family's finances which depended on her parents' meager wages. They lived from hand to mouth, never knowing where their next meal would come from.

At the age of 17, perceived to be the most attractive age for women in Vietnam, she suffered

a sudden seizure and fell into a big pot of boiling water. The accident burned 12% of her face and body, forcing her to have 1/3 of her left arm amputated and two knuckles removed from her right hand.

Tragically, she suffered another epileptic seizure a year later and fell right into a burning fire. This fall exacerbated her old burns and permanently damaged her right eye, injuries that she will have to endure the rest of her life.

After learning of Maison Chance and its work with disabled people, her parents asked that she stay and pursue painting at the center.

Skills that were simple for others were challenging for Tien. Even the most basic tasks such as holding a paintbrush or mixing colors were long and difficult journeys, but she appreciated the opportunity and put in her best effort to make the most of it.

She believed it was her one chance to change her future. Even though she suffered debilitating injuries that left her twice on the brink of death, she continues living optimistically and confidently. Despite the many losses she has suffered at the hands of fate, she always motivates herself to be positive and takes action to reassure her loved ones.

Maison Chance hopes that she will succeed in her new home and turn a new chapter in her life. It is our goal to assist her and others like her in regaining control of their lives and help them re-enter into society.



Tien is studying drawing at Maison Chance Dak Nong.



Tien with one of her first pencil drawings at the drawing room of Maison Chance Dak Nong.

ANIMAL THERAPY AT THE MAISON CHANCE CENTER IN DAK NONG

Animal therapy, also known as pet-assisted therapy, uses animals to improve a patient's social, emotional, or cognitive functioning. Studies have shown that fostering relationships between people and animals can be beneficial, providing calm and support and even improving physiologic measures such as blood pressure and hormone levels. By interacting with animals such as dogs, horses, goats, and rabbits, patients can better manage their medical conditions or mental disorders.

Recognizing the utility of animal therapy, the Maison Chance Center in Dak Nong Province has taken advantage of its livestock farm to incorporate animal therapy into its healthcare program. The many people that the center serves – from paralyzed adults to children with Down syndrome – will benefit immensely from this new resource. We are particularly excited about the growth of equine therapy at the center which medical professionals have long used to treat cerebral palsy and autism.

After their daily studies and work, special needs children and disabled beneficiaries will participate in animal therapy sessions where they will care for and play with animals at the center. To complement animal therapy, members will also have the opportunity to engage in vegetable gardening which will improve their physical and mental health.

Animal therapy is a common treatment resource at hospitals, nursing homes, and rehabilitation centers throughout the world. And now, it is bringing both incredible joy and positive health outcomes to the center's disabled and special needs members. In the future, we hope to expand our animal therapy program so that more members can reap its many physical and mental benefits.



Children with developmental delays are very interested in participating in the animal-assisted therapy program.



CULTIVATING “NEW BLACK GOLD” IN DAK NONG



Vanilla flower.

Anyone who has had a scoop of vanilla ice cream or caught a whiff of vanilla in a freshly baked cake knows the delicate yet powerfully enticing aroma of the vanilla spice. But what is lesser known, and perhaps only intuited by vanilla's high price, is the difficulty in cultivating such a high-end ingredient.

Undaunted by the challenge and inspired by both vanilla's fragrance and the potential of growing a profitable crop, Ms. Tim set out in 2011 to build Maison Chance's own vanilla plantation. The Maison Chance Center in Dak Nong proved to be an ideal location for a new vanilla plantation due to the optimal climate and geography of the province. Ms. Tim traveled to vanilla plantations in Vietnam and throughout the world, enlisting the assistance of vanilla experts to help launch her initiative. From La Reunion Island off the coast of Madagascar to Indonesia, she sought out the leaders in the vanilla industry to learn as much as she could about vanilla cultivation and production.

Finally, after years of research and planning, the project will break ground in December 2022. With the assistance of Mr. Bertrand Côme, an expert and proprietor of a large vanilla plantation on La Reunion Island, we will begin the process of testing 1,000 plants on a 1008m² parcel of land.

This new vanilla plantation will help raise funds for Maison Chance's community activities and make it more financially independent, but it will also help the many impoverished ethnic minority groups in Dak Nong. Harvesting and selling vanilla will create much-needed jobs for the locals, and in the future, vanilla cultivation techniques could be taught to them. Introducing vanilla agriculture to Dak Nong will foster the region's economic development. We are optimistic that with Ms. Tim's enthusiasm for vanilla and the guidance of leading vanilla experts, this project will progress quickly and yield positive results.

Let's wait for the first vanilla beans from the Maison Chance plantation!

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