

VOLUNTEERS FOR PEACE VIETNAM



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Website : <http://www.vpv.vn/>

Piece of Mind



And April has arrived. It is a special month of mixed weather. Some days it is chilly like spring yet some days it feels hot like summer. Some days the sun shines brightly yet some days it rains like cats and dogs.

It is a common tendency to enjoy sunny and warm days more than cold and rainy ones. Yet for me, every day in any weather condition has its own beauty.

"Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather."
- John Ruskin

So, let's enjoy our day, no matter how the weather is. :)

- T.Mai

* Pictures from internet



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Ao Dai Photoshoot



Last month, VPV staff organised a photoshoot in Ao Dai for our international volunteers.

Ao Dai is the traditional Vietnamese outfit. Ao dai is not just a costume, but an expression of identity and spirit of Vietnam. In Vietnam, ao dai is the dress for all ages and for both men and women. It has become the standard costume for formal occasions or national holidays, weddings, New Year's Day, graduation day or in important competitions. Ao dai is the uniform for female students and teachers in many high schools. Some other professions also use ao dai as their uniform.



Ao dai is one of the few Vietnamese words that appear in English-language dictionaries. Indeed, ao dai has helped promote Vietnam's image around the world.

Around 15 volunteers joined the photoshoot. Rebecca, from Sweden, joined it. Here is what she thought :

"The photoshoot with the traditional ao dai was definitely interesting. For me the most fun part was the activities and especially the traditional dances. It was fun to not only see it but actually get to try it. I thought the bamboo dance was really cool and fun (I had never heard of it before).

This day didn't just give me pictures of beautiful people in beautiful clothing, I learned more about the Vietnamese traditional clothing and dances which is something I find valuable."



Yannik and Rebecca at Nguyen Tat Thanh

Yannik and Rebecca are two German long-term volunteers who are currently teaching English at Nguyen Tat Thanh secondary and high school. They just finished their project a few days ago.

Here are some thoughts about their experience at the school:

"Our work consists of supporting the teachers and helping the students, especially with their pronunciation.

Furthermore, we often attend special events that the school organises and help wherever we can. Examples are English competitions, a Halloween costume and the English festival. We are really happy about how good everything works and how it went for us at Nguyen Tat Thanh secondary and high school.





Not only the teachers but also the students welcomed us very warmly. The fact that we could build a lot of individual connections to single students, even though there are about 40 of them in each class, surprised us in a very positive way.

The thing that we originally tried to achieve at Nguyen Tat Thanh secondary and high school was getting the students to practice talking and expressing themselves in English and at first, we didn't notice the huge improvements they all made because of how much fun we had together!"



Greek groups in Hai Duong

From the 9th to the 22th of March, two groups of volunteers from Greece have come to Vietnam to take part in a construction project in Hai Duong. The aim of the project is to support local people building two classes for a kindergarten at Dong Bao Village, Tien Dong Commune, Tu Ky District, Hai Duong. The major task of the groups was doing construction work, with the first group having done a part of the foundation and the second group having supported the local workers to build the wall.



Besides the manual works, the groups have participated and organised some activities which were very meaningful and wonderful. The first group has cooperated with the mayor of the village to organise a cultural night that gave a chance for volunteers to introduce about Greece's traditional food and some performances. To response the wonderful spirit of volunteers, the local people and children have also prepared some dances too. It was an unforgettable night.

The second group took part in an English festival and Greece cultural exchange which was organised by a local primary school. They were divided into three different groups performing a dance/role play/song together with the students to spread out one humanitarian message (like no discrimination or save the environment).

Although they didn't have much time to prepare the performance, they did a really excellent job and everyone applauded. Everyone enjoyed the festival so much. The volunteers also introduced some dance/basic information about Greece too.

During that time at the project, the groups visited the centre kindergarten of the village and they have had chance to play with local children and to meet local teachers. The volunteers also prepared some games and brought toys for the children.





Local people were very happy to receive the support of the groups. They appreciated the effort and contribution of volunteers spending time to work at the village. They have invited the groups several times to visit their houses and do karaoke together. Therefore, the volunteers had have great opportunities to experience and learn more about Vietnamese life, culture and people.

Despite of the changeable weather, some differences in terms of living condition, language and culture, etc volunteers still kept up high spirit and energy. In general, the camp was successful and full of unforgettable memories.

"Volunteering while traveling is another way to connect, share experiences and genuine emotions. In My Quest trips we embrace the culture of a place. It might mean living with a local family, sharing a meal with a local, playing with the kids, learning the language or simply interacting in daily little moments.

It has been a unique experience that open doors to a deeper understanding of people in a different place, exchange ideas and practices and share emotions."

- Kelly, Greek volunteer

The Friendship Village - A place of healing

The Friendship village was established in 1998 by George Mizo, a US veteran who has desire to heal the wound of the Vietnam - American war. In the following years, many people from different countries have joined to support the village, and today an international committee with representatives from the US, Canada, Germany, Japan, and Vietnam is working together to finance and manage the village. The aim of the village is to giving care and support to the people who were exposed by Agent Orange like Vietnamese veterans, children, teenagers, etc.



The residents of the village come from different provinces and have a variety of health problems, ranging from mental handicaps to physical deformities and sensory limitations. The village provides the residents with basic treatment, food grown in onsite gardens, basic education and crafts as well. There are 6 special classes, one movement class, on computer class, 3 vocational training classes for more than 100 children in the village.

VPV has been sending international volunteers to the village for more than 10 years. Volunteers are sent there to support teachers in the classes with some activities like teaching math, drawing, colouring, cleansing classes, and teaching the children some other life skills, etc.

"The friendship village is a symbol of the international solidarity reconciliation, and the continued efforts to heal the pains of the war caused by Agent Orange"

- G. Mizo.

"I have been working there for almost 2 years as a coordinator, words are not enough to express my feeling and my thought when working at the village. I have learned so many valuable things from the children, the teachers, and the people I have met there. It's not only about knowledge or experiences, but also about sympathy, patience, and love."

- Trang





Volunteers for Peace Vietnam (VPV)



Upcoming events



Indian night
Friday 12th



Football game
Monday 15th



Culture night
Friday 19th



Marvel
Photoshoot



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