

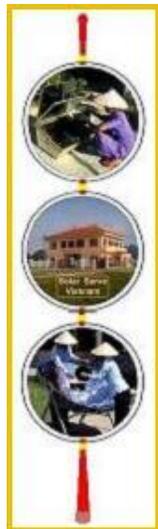


April / May / June 2009 No.21

Solar Serve News

Dear friends,

It has been awhile since we posted our last newsletter. The only excuse is that some of us have been away. Hans left for three months to his home country and Bich joined a 6 week business course in Thailand. So we had to make priorities and decided to postpone this letter till the end of March. Only one of you asked us about this delay, so we believe that the rest of you could live with it. Thanks for your patience.



A special wedding

Trung and Kim were our first deaf couple who got married. They invited more than 200 guests to their wedding party. They came on stage with lots of confetti and bangs. The father of the groom gave a short speech and after a photo session they walked around to welcome the guests at the tables. Meanwhile, the wedding meal was served and some people entertained the guests with singing. After the meal, everyone stood up and said good-bye. It was a wonderful day for Trung and Kim.



Bookmarks and round mobiles

We printed three-dimensional bookmarks and round mobiles. We asked our staff to cut and glue them. First it was difficult, but after a few days the result was great. We have two different kinds of bookmarks which have a picture of the center at the back. The three-dimensional mobiles are made of round paper coasters. In front are pictures of the box cooker, the center and the parabolic cooker, and at the back some information. Also a limited number of mini-cookers have been made. The bookmarks, round mobiles and mini-cookers are made for support and will be available for tourists visiting the Center.



Tour groups

Last year we had several tour groups visiting our center. The first 21 tourists were retired and middle-aged people. We met them at Marble Mountains and drove them to our center. After an introduction we gave them a tour at our factory. They found it very interesting and took lots of pictures. We also sold some bookmarks and after one hour they moved on to Hoi An. We were all encouraged by this first visit. Two weeks later another group came to visit us and showed the same interest.



Introduction course

Bich and Hans traveled to Hanoi to attend a short introduction course. A businessman from Europe gave lots of information on how to establish an enterprise. It was based on good and right principles. It was very instructive and many new ideas came up during these two days. After that Bich decided to attend a six week business course in Thailand with many lectures in class and in the marketplace. It was a short but intensive course. Bich learned a lot and received his diploma last month.



Artists, dancers and volunteers

We had several groups from Brazil, Korea and San Francisco visiting us. They all showed their excitement after seeing our center. Some of them were circus artists and dancers. It was great to see the joy appearing on the faces of children and adults when they performed. Even our deaf workers enjoyed it. Another group performed a drama based on a Vietnamese legend. The locals loved it and it was really appreciated.



Misunderstandings

The seven deaf workers did not show up for their work at the center. We found out that they were very confused about their work and had taken wrong conclusions. Our hearing staff is not yet able to do the sign language well. Eventually Bich spoke with their parents. He had several meetings with them. They came up with some good ideas. The next day all deaf workers came back. It was good to be open with them and to show forgiveness and understanding. After that the peace returned.

More visitors

Other visitors from Holland, Switzerland, Finland, Singapore, USA and Vietnam visited us. Three Vietnamese professors wanted to see the solar village near our center. Several newspapers had written articles about this village which we supplied with solar cookers last year. Several people came to visit this village already. Also the professors wanted to know if it worked. Later they came to our center and were very pleased with the results.

Heart Surgery

Do you still remember Lien? He was working with us a few years ago? See our web site (Solar Serve News No.6). He came back to Danang with his son Hiep. They received financial support from an organization for Hiep to have heart surgery. After Hiep was born they discovered a hole in his little heart. Two months ago some foreign surgeons did the operation. It lasted 4 hours. The operation was successful and Hiep is now recovering at his home.



Nominated

Fred has been handicapped since he was young, but has been sponsoring our work for years. During a sport gala he was nominated. After 20 years of hard work, courage and pressing on, he received his award from his local mayor. His sponsor walks (160 km in four days – every year) have been an example for many people (picture: Fred right).

Finally:

- During this Summer we will be working in Quang Tri province (north of Hue city) to help the poor with solar cookers. We will also check up the cookers we supplied last year in the same province.

- We are still working in the solar village Hoa Quy near our center. An article was published in a major Vietnamese newspaper and was translated for several other English newspapers. Please click: <http://www.monre.gov.vn/v35/default.aspx?tabid=675&CatelD=58&ID=59609&Code=PU3OZ59609>

- We have also been asked to provide 20 parabols and 30 box-cookers in Kon Tum, a province located in the Central Highlands near the border of Laos and Cambodia. We are waiting for a confirmation.

- We have closed our information room near the airport. Since we opened the center near Marble Mountains there is no need for this room anymore. We will consider other ways of making our work known.



- The kitchen parabol cooker still needs improvement but it works. It can burn newspapers like the Olympic torch.

Well, this is all the news we have for now. Thanks for your friendship.

Warm solar greetings from Danang,

Solar Serve Team

Called to Serve

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Or write to: solarserve@yahoo.com