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Solar Serve News

Dear friends,

Thank you so much for all your encouragements. It is always great to hear from you. Sometimes we need a few simple words to go on. Till now we do not know if there is any other organization or NGO in Vietnam doing the same kind of work what we are doing. Our goal is to help poor people in the countryside in using this kind of simple technology for daily cooking. We always try to use local material and to keep the cost as low as possible. There is no copyright on the cookers. It is just helping poor people in using free sunshine. We will be very happy if others will pick it up too.

Helping the poor and needy

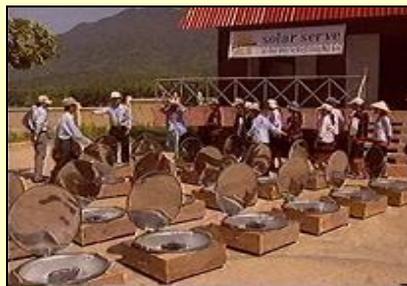
While we are helping the poor with the solar cookers, we see many other needs. This Summer for example one of our staff, Mrs. Ngoc, took care of a 15 years old boy, after his parents separated and left him behind. We were also able to support others in difficult circumstances. The solar cookers are not really free, but we look at peoples living standard in order to make up a price which can be food, work, money or sometimes free. It is not our purpose to make a profit although the parabolic solar cookers may be used for covering the costs of the box solar cookers. We need to consider this carefully, because of all kinds of (tax) regulations in Vietnam. Last year we were checked by some (secret) tax collectors, who wanted to buy a solar cooker in order to find out if we were selling anything.

Mid-Autumn Festival in Danang

The last few days you could hear the sound of drums and gongs everywhere. Children parade in the street with decorative lanterns and lion dances are performed. On the 15th day of the 8th month (lunar calendar) when the moon is full and bright, the Vietnamese children (and also the adults) celebrate their Mid-Autumn festival. This year it will be celebrated on the 28th of September. It is also known as a mini-Tet (mini-new years day) for children, and mooncakes or a toy are special presents given at this time. The Chinese do not celebrate this Mid-Autumn Festival like the Vietnamese (which is a children's festival), but they called it a Family Reunion Festival. No matter how far they are from home, Chinese return to their native place to reunite with their families.

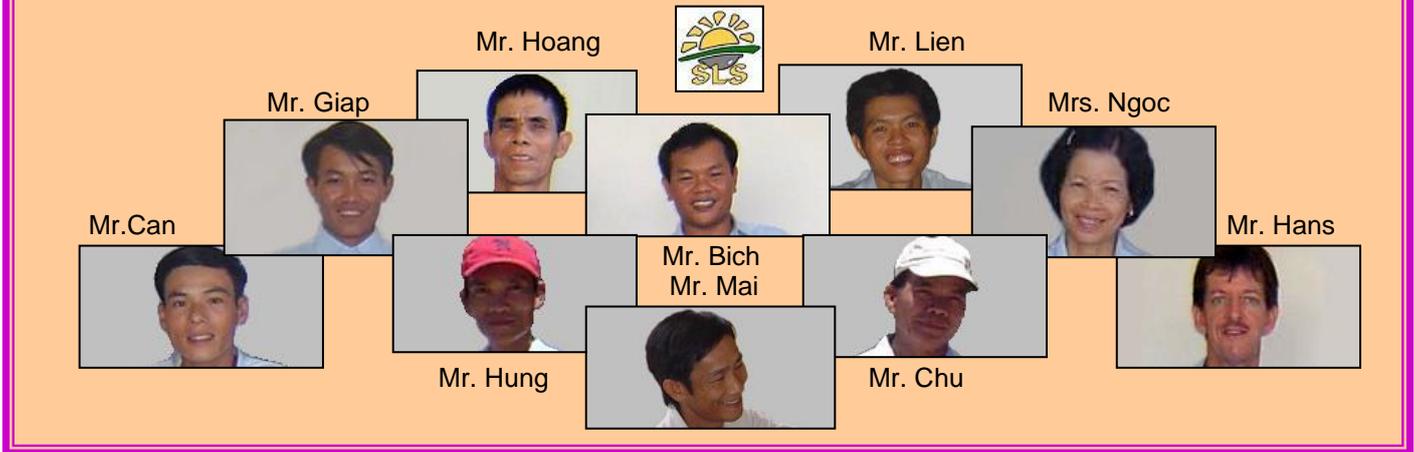
New excitement

Well, our solar cookers do not work during those full moon evenings, and also not during the coming raining season, but this Summer we had many clear and sunny days. We were amazed of all the good things which came out of this year's program. Two things were outstanding. First of all our new parabolic cookers. We had very good results during demonstrations and even one was transported to Hanoi to be used for research by the Ministry of Agriculture. Secondly, our new project with de Katu people, an ethnic minority group. In our last letter we wrote about this group. Our first contact was encouraging and later we found out that they used the cookers for making their own herbal medicines. When our staff were teaching, a film crew showed up and made a short documentary. Here are some shots which were shown on Danang television:



Solar Serve Staff conference

Last month we came together for our yearly Solar Serve staff conference at the beach in Danang. Two days of training, en-couraging, discussing and resting were appreciated by all staff. Mr. Bich's wife and 3 children came along, so we had a full house. Here are some pictures. Two of our staff were not attending at the beach, but they are on the pictures below:



Kia Truck

This year we had some minor accidents on our motorbikes while we were moving material. In Vietnam the owner of the motorbike is responsible for any damage and has to pay for all broken parts. We decided to have mercy on the drivers because we had not provided good transportation. It was dangerous to move the glass covers from one place to another. Many transport companies are afraid to move such material. We decided to look for a pick-up truck, able to enter difficult roads and climb steep mountains. Last month we found a four-wheel drive truck, able to transport material and enough box and parabolic solar cookers. We were also very happy that some generous people made it possible for us to buy one (soon). This will really help us for the coming season when we are planning to expand our project. The model of the truck on the picture is the same, but the back wheels (4drive) of our truck will be bigger.



Keep in touch!

We really made this letter for you. We hope you enjoy reading it. Next time when you come to Danang you will be able to move around better. We met some foreigners last week who were studying Vietnamese in Danang. This couple paid 120 USD per months for renting a small house outside the city (near the beach) and 80 USD per person for 30 hours language study per month. So if you have plans to stay in Danang, you should consider a language course, stay at the beach and become...very old...(smile!)...well, it is not all that easy. You need a lot of courage, patience and perseverance to stay and live in this city. Therefore, if you do not come...please remember us. So, please keep in touch while we are all serving in the presence of the



Greetings,
Solar Serve Team

Called To Serve

For more Solar Serve News:
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