**What is Leprosy?**

- Leprosy is an infectious disease caused by a bacteria, *Mycobacterium Leprae*, affecting mainly the skin, peripheral nerves, mucosa, and eyes.
- A disease that can cause sensory deficit and muscle weakness to extremities – disfigurement, ulcer formation and contractures.
- Transmitted primarily through respiratory route, droplets or long term contact.
- Manifestation depends on multiple factors: nutrition, hygiene, genetic predisposition.
- Leprosy was known to the ancient Babylonians, Hebrews, Greeks, Romans and is mentioned frequently in the Bible.

Leprosy is a treatable disease

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**Friends of Lepers** is a non-profit, non-political and non-religious organization formed in 1995.


- Organization is made up entirely of volunteers working quietly behind the scenes.

- Our main source income comes from donations worldwide and an annual concert put on by volunteer performers.

- Rely on network of local caretakers (nuns, priests, monks, nurses in VN) to provide actual care

- Team members visit Vietnam 2 to 3 times a year (paid at their own expense) to assess, assist and monitor projects.

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**A ccomplishments F or the Past 13 Y ears**

- Provide supplemental meals for 3,655 lepers
- Provide 1,485 scholarships for lepers children
- Build 125 houses for recovered lepers
- Build two health clinics, two elementary schools and two dormitories
- Provide funds for 172 leper families to resettle in society
- Receive annual donations from over 5,000 people

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**Funds vs. Expenses in 2007**

- Funds Raised In 2007
- Expenses In 2007

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**Our Website:** www.nguoicui.org

**Non-Profit Organization #43-079664**

**DONATIONS**

All donations are 100% tax-deductible. Any amount will be graciously appreciated; 100% of all proceeds will go directly to those that are in need of our help. All contributions made will receive written confirmation and thank you letter.

You can send your check contribution to the following address:

Hoi Ban Nguoi Cui
P.O. BOX 1408
Tustin, CA 92781

For more information, please contact one of the following people:

Vietnamese: Mr. Cong Nguyen 714.785.7950
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English: Mr. Tuan M. Tran 714.658.5079
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Dr. Van Ho is one of the best and most successful doctors who has been born and raised in a leper neighborhood. As a child, he had never known his parents and was often ill because of the leprosy. Yet, with the financial and emotional support from the "Friends of the Lepers in Vietnam," he was able to finish high school and attend medical school. As a graduate of one of the top medical schools in Vietnam, he is now an emergency physician back in his hometown. He is able to realize his dream of providing medical care to the lepers in his neighborhood, once again with the help of the "Friends of the Lepers in Vietnam." In 2008, he opened the first state-of-the-art medical clinic in Vietnam solely dedicated to providing free care and medicine for the lepers. It is heart-warming to see that the clinic is being run by the very children of these lepers. As a master of neurology and neurosurgery, he is able to help many patients who were suffering from serious and complicated diseases.

Dr. Tran also guided us to a shoe factory that the "Friends of the Lepers in Vietnam" had helped build. Here, they make individual custom shoes from plaster molds they had previously taken of the patient's feet. Many wounds, sores, infections, and deformities can be prevented by the simple use of proper fitting shoes.

From a medical perspective, it is clear that the most effective interventions are still those that provide the basic essentials of life-food, clean water, fuel for cooking and heating, shelter and basic health care. Secondarily, interventions that prevent the chronic infections that lead to amputations are prescribed shoes to prevent foot trauma and wound care to prevent the chronic infections that lead to amputations are the highest priority.

No matter which colony or facility we were visiting, we were warmly greeted by everyone, and it was clear that the efforts we were making for these people were appreciated with one's own eyes. Vietnam is a wonderful country, and I can only hope that our work will continue to help improve the lives of people there.

My name is Tri An Tri Nguyen. I live in Xom Nho, a small village that we visited, and I am an emergency physician. As a graduate of one of the top medical schools in Vietnam, I am now an emergency physician in the city of Hanoi. I am very appreciative of the work that "Friends of the Lepers in Vietnam" has done for me. I have been able to help many people who were suffering from serious and complicated diseases.

I think having an education does not warrant the stuck-up mentality. There are people who do not have a higher education but still have excellent character and is success in life. To me having an education allows us to come to the realization that we are supported by the people far away from Viet Nam who are constantly helping us to support us. There are many paths in life. I am still young and have a lot to learn, but I acknowledge that without the support of the "Friends of the Lepers in Vietnam," I would not be able to do what I am doing today. It's like you have given me wings to fly.