



Helping the Developing World Walk Again

Just One of the Girls



By Kim Trinh, POF Volunteer

The first time I met Trang, she was running with her classmates during a PE class at Tu Son High School. Her long hair, bright face, and small figure appeared and disappeared behind every tree. Her uniform blended in with those of her classmates, and from afar, no one could tell that she was running with a prosthetic limb.

Having lost her limb in 1993 at the age of two, Trang could not recall the details of her accident, but her grandmother forced back tears as she recounted the event. Trang was just a toddler; she barely knew how to walk. Her grandfather took her to play near the train tracks behind the house and she got away from his watchful eyes. A train passed by and he, upon hearing his granddaughter's cry, turned back to see her leg caught under the track. "The train seemed to take so much longer to pass our house that day," her grandmother said with much difficulty. "When I went outside to see what had happened, I saw my granddaughter lying on the track."

The little girl was immediately rushed to the hospital. "While she was in the hospital, we were all afraid. She was so young and precious...but all we could do was wait," said her grandmother. And so they waited, in fear and doubt, as Trang was treated for her injury. She was released from the hospital shortly after; her leg had been amputated.



Trang, Age 3

The next few months were challenging for Trang's family. Still shocked by the accident and fearful for the future of their little girl, they watched as Trang went about her playing and growing, not fully aware of the heavy atmosphere pressing on the rest of her family. "When my child learned to take her first steps, she learned to take them with a

crutch," her mother described. "It was difficult, and she could only move around the house." Each step she took seemed to bring more questions; each fall seemed to evoke more fear.

Six months after her surgery, however, Trang was fitted with her first prosthesis by POF. The grief that overshadowed her family and the guilt that haunted the mind of her grandfather were slowly relieved as she learned to walk

again—this time, without the help of her crutches. Many years have passed, and Trang is now a sophomore in high school. She rides her bike to

school every day, plays with her friends, and attends her classes. Her prosthesis allows her to climb stairs, run during PE, or simply help her mother with household work.

"The train seemed to take so much longer to pass our house that day."



Trang, age 16, runs with her classmates

Mrs. Hong, Coordinator of the POF Center in Hanoi, commented, "In a way, Trang grew up with our program. For more than ten years, we've seen her and fitted her for a new prosthetic limb every six to twelve months. We've been watching her grow up." Her mother and grandmother smiled in agreement.

Special Online Feature:

Visit www.pofsea.org
for a pictorial timeline of Trang's life
as an amputee.

Three Legs Across America: the Great Plains

By Nancy Nelson, POF Supporter

This will be the third year of *Three Legs Across America*. POF supporters Nancy Nelson and Dan Fender will start in Rawlins, Wyoming, where they left off in their multi-year tandem bicycle ride across the US. Nancy is a below-the-knee amputee, hence the *Three Legs* moniker. Friends, family and POF supporters have made generous donations in honor of this ride, all earmarked for artificial legs for Vietnamese amputees.

Here are a few highlights about this year's upcoming ride:

- We'll ride across the highest pass on our entire journey: Hoosier Pass, 11,542 feet, east of Breckenridge, Colorado.

- We'll cross the half-way mark of our 4,248 mile ride (2005: 700 miles; 2006: 735 miles). We've already crossed the half-way mark of our original goal of raising \$100,000 for Vietnamese amputees.

- We'll be riding a new bicycle. Those of you who've been reading about this adventure since the beginning know that a weld broke on our original frame on the second day of our ride. Thanks to the kindness of numerous strangers, the break was repaired and we were on our way in a matter of hours, but after thousands of miles there was just no way the

original bike was going to make it all the way to the east coast.

- And, we'll at least get started on our way across Kansas. Neither of us has ever been there before; we're hoping it's really as flat as everyone says it is.

A specific starting date for this year's three week ride hasn't been set yet, but it will be sometime in late August. It's a

balancing act between leaving early enough to miss snow in the Rockies, but late enough to avoid the heat, humidity, thunderstorms and bugs of the mid-west. And we never know quite where we'll end – it needs to be somewhere we can box up the bike and get it and ourselves back to Olympia, Washington, our home base.

You can help support the great work of POF without getting saddle sore! Be a part of this great adventure

by donating online today at www.pofsea.org or returning your gift in the enclosed envelope. Please be sure to note that it is for *Three Legs Across America*. Three hundred dollars will buy a new leg for an amputee in Vietnam. The first \$5,000 raised will be matched dollar for dollar. All donations are welcome and appreciated by us, by POF and most of all, by the people in Vietnam who will once again be able to walk.



Nancy and Dan at last year's finish line, this year's starting line

Thank You For Your Tremendous Support!

On March 3, the Prosthetics Outreach Foundation (POF) hosted its third annual auction at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue, WA. What a night to remember!

More than 260 friends and supporters celebrated with us and raised over \$237,000 for our worldwide programs!

**Thank you so much
for your caring and generosity!**

Our special thanks go to our many event sponsors, a complete list of which can be found on our website at www.pofsea.org. On behalf of the disabled children and adults whom we serve, thank you for your support!



POF Begins Outreach to Amputees in Rural Sierra Leone

POF Program Director Ray Pye recently returned from a visit to our new prosthetics center in Makeni, Sierra Leone. He reports that the center is ready to begin providing outreach services to amputees living in rural northern Sierra Leone. It is a moment anxiously awaited by amputees in the northern districts as well as POF staff in Makeni.

Since completion of the structure in June 2006, the new Makeni Prosthetics Center building has become self-sufficient, with its own diesel electric generator, water supply, and sewer system, allowing work to continue while the larger Makeni Government Hospital complex is still under construction nearby.

The Makeni Prosthetics Center is currently staffed with a team of three local employees, who manage and carry out workshop production. Bambino Suma, the team leader, is an ISPO-certified prosthetic technologist. Ibrahim Turay and Ishmael Sesay, workshop assistants, are both amputees and active leaders of the amputee community in Makeni. Since last summer, this team has made and fitted more than 40 patients with custom-made artificial limbs at the Makeni Prosthetics Center.

Recently, POF took delivery of an outreach vehicle, a Toyota hardtop 4-wheel drive. Funds for the vehicle were raised at POF's 2006 auction. This vehicle is essential for rural outreach operations, transporting the team and materials on rough roads to the remote chiefdoms of Northern Sierra Leone.

Also in preparation for rural outreach, POF has been conducting amputee registrations in two of five northern districts, Bombali and Koinadugu. Nearly 400 amputees have been registered to date, with only 50% of the chiefdoms having reported their registrations.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Health & Sanitation's District Medical Officer, Makeni Prosthetics Center staff are



*New 4-Wheel Drive Rural Outreach Vehicle
Makeni, Sierra Leone*



The new generator is installed at the Makeni Prosthetics Center

now preparing their first outreach visit. To arrange these visits, the Makeni Prosthetics Center coordinates with the Paramount Chief of each chiefdom that is being visited to contact amputees through a network of local village chiefs. POF also advertises the outreach visit dates and locations on community radio, encouraging as many amputees as possible to take advantage of the service.

The outreach visits in Sierra Leone will follow the same model that POF has been using successfully in Vietnam for more than a decade. Each chiefdom will be visited twice by local POF staff. On the first trip, the staff will take plaster casts of amputees' residual limbs and document all other measurements and personal info needed to custom-design and manufacture the prostheses back at the Makeni Prosthetics Center. After the prostheses have been fabricated at the Center, the team will make a second trip, returning to the chiefdom for delivery and fitting.

Initially, it is expected that a minimum of 20 patients will be cast and fitted during each outreach cycle. The Makeni Prosthetics Center is planning to make at least three casting outreach trips during May and June before the rainy season limits transportation to some of the more remote chiefdoms. As rural outreach becomes part of the center's regular schedule, the team will be able to provide consistent follow-up services to patients living in remote areas. This outreach model gives the POF staff the opportunity to connect personally with each amputee, to familiarize the amputees with the services of the prosthetics center, and to assist them with the use and maintenance of their prostheses.

Through the registration process, amputees living in remote chiefdoms have expressed great excitement about the prospect that they will soon be visited by members of the Makeni Prosthetics Center and receive prosthetic services. "If they were only here already! I can hardly wait any longer to work and help my family again," says one of the waiting amputees.

POF Begins Clubfoot Project in Vietnam



Vietnamese infant born with clubfoot

(Continued from back cover)

One of the most common congenital conditions, clubfoot is found in one to three babies out of every thousand born worldwide. In developed countries such as the United States, the effects of clubfoot are rarely seen because children born with this condition are treated promptly after birth, effectively preventing them from becoming disabled. In most developing countries, however, medical personnel lack the training to identify and properly treat clubfoot at an early age. Instead, the condition

is neglected, resulting in crippling, lifelong disability that is both physically and psychologically painful. Forced to stand on the sides and even tops of their feet, children with neglected clubfoot are unable to walk, run, or be physically active. They are marginalized by their peers, often unable to attend school, and, as they grow older, encounter great obstacles finding employment and often finding a spouse.

Many doctors and nurses throughout rural provinces in northern Vietnam are unaware that effective clubfoot treatment exists and do not know how to identify the condition in infants. Believing nothing can be done, they often send parents home without even notifying them that their child has been born with a deformity, if they recognize it at all.

The heart-breaking results are visible in POF's orthopedic surgical work: children with severe cases of clubfoot who must now be treated with multiple corrective surgeries. These surgeries are possible, but are expensive and so complex that few Vietnamese surgeons possess the skills to perform them. Over the past four years, POF has partnered with the American Orthopedic Foot and Ankle Society (AOFAS) and Vietnamese surgeons to provide surgeries in Vietnam, many of which are for neglected clubfoot.

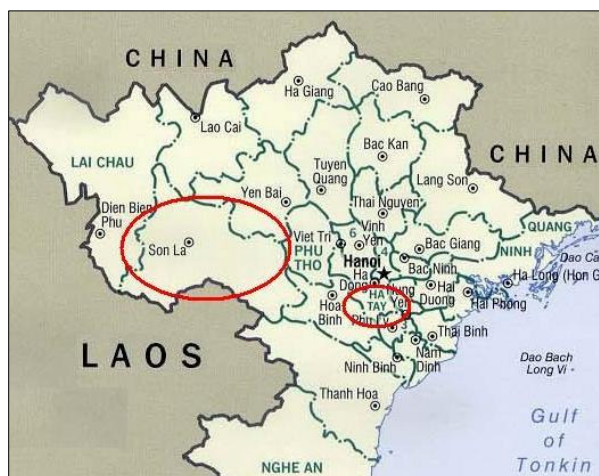
Because clubfoot is so debilitating when neglected, a variety of different treatment methods have been developed. One of the most effective was pioneered in the 1950s by Dr. Ignacio Ponseti, a surgeon at the University of Iowa. His simple, low-cost method has come to be known as the "Ponseti Method"

and is ideally suited for use in developing countries. The Ponseti Method involves a series of manual foot manipulations and plaster casts to correct the position of the foot, followed by a bracing protocol, using shoe braces to maintain the correction. Through initial research, POF determined that the Ponseti Method would be an affordable, appropriate, and effective method of treatment for use in Vietnam.

POF has begun demonstration projects to introduce the Ponseti Method to two Provinces in northern Vietnam: Son La and Ha Tay. In cooperation with the Son La Provincial Hospital and the Ha Tay Orthopedic Technical Rehabilitation Center (OTRC), POF's goal is to fund the treatment of 15 clubfoot babies at each site in 2007. Ultimately, we hope to embed clubfoot awareness, identification, and treatment within the healthcare system in the eight northern provinces where POF is currently working, from the local clinic level all the way to the major regional hospitals. In these provinces alone, this could prevent between 300 and 800 babies *per year* from developing a crushing physical disability. Implementation of the clubfoot demonstration projects has begun with four major activities:



Young surgical patient with neglected clubfoot



First, POF sponsored doctors at the Son La Provincial Hospital and Ha Tay Orthopedic Technical Rehabilitation Center (OTRC) to be trained in the Ponseti treatment method. Having returned to their facilities, the doctors are preparing their departments to receive and treat clubfoot babies.

Second, POF has sponsored the first of a series of seminars, training maternity hospital staff

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POF Begins Clubfoot Project in Vietnam

(Continued from page 4)

and nurses in recognizing and referring clubfoot cases to local hospitals or health centers. By mid-April, two clubfoot cases had already been referred to Son La Provincial Hospital by nurses in attendance.

Third, POF is promoting the local development of Foot Abduction Braces (the corrective shoes worn by babies after they finish the casting phase of the Ponseti Treatment).

Fourth, POF developed educational materials to help teach parents about clubfoot treatment and their important role in ensuring its success.

After over a decade and a half of helping Vietnamese amputees regain the ability to walk, POF is in the unique position of being able to help prevent Vietnamese children from losing this precious ability. The Clubfoot Demonstration Projects are the first exciting steps to bring the gift of clubfoot prevention to children and their parents throughout northern Vietnam. This project will immeasurably change the lives of disadvantaged children—not only now, but also into the future as they grow up with greater opportunities to learn, work, and develop their full human potential.



Shoe braces for Ponseti clubfoot treatment, developed at Ha Tay Orthopedic Center

Vietnam Orthopedic Surgical Project in its Sixth Year

In May-June 2007, two teams of volunteer orthopedic surgeons will travel to Vietnam to restore mobility to at least 60 disabled children and adults. The program, now in its sixth year, is sponsored by the Prosthetics Outreach Foundation, the American Orthopaedic Foot & Ankle Society, and the Vietnamese Ministry of Health, Invalids, and Social Affairs. Many of this year's patients suffer from debilitating limb deformities, including clubfoot. Others are amputees in need of revision surgery of their residual limbs due to painful bone spurs, excessive scar tissue, etc. "Many of these children and adults have waited for years to receive surgery. Some had given up hope to ever walk normally again. It is tremendously gratifying to be able to provide these surgeries and end years of suffering", says POF Executive Director Winfried Danke.

This year, the first team of volunteer surgeons is scheduled to arrive in



Young surgical patient pictured on page 4 recovers after the first of two surgeries to correct neglected clubfoot

Vietnam on May 18th. Drs. E. Greer Richardson, M.D., of Tennessee, and Steven C. Sheskier, M.D., of New York will volunteer their surgical expertise for one week each at the Vinh Orthopedic Center and the Ha Tay Orthopedic Center.

The second team will arrive in Vietnam on June 1st. Drs. Michael M. Romash, M.D., from Virginia, and Dr. Meir Nyska, from Israel will spend their first week in Vinh as well before moving on to perform additional surgeries in mountainous northwestern Lao Cai Province.

Both teams will be joined by Project Leader Naomi N. Shields, M.D. and POF Board Member Pierce E. Scranton, Jr., M.D., on June 2nd for the Annual Orthopedic Surgery Seminar in Hanoi. After the conference, Drs. Richardson and Sheskier will return home while Drs. Romash and Nyska begin their volunteer surgical missions. Drs. Shields and Scranton will remain in Hanoi.

“Mobility Camp” Successfully Piloted in Bangladesh

On a warm day in February 2004, Shiuly and her young son stood on the roadside near their village, waiting to catch a local taxi. They were on their way to visit Shiuly’s parents in a nearby village, a much-anticipated monthly outing. The boy chatted excitedly, anxious to see his beloved Grandpa, and receive something sweet from his doting Grandma.

It wasn’t long before they saw the approaching “nosimon”, an open, three-wheeled van commonly used for public transportation in rural Bangladesh. Holding her son in her arms, Shiuly climbed into the back of the vehicle and moved toward an open seat. Before she could sit down, the van suddenly started moving again, jarring her body backward. With her one free hand, Shiuly frantically reached for something to hold on to but it was too late. She and her son were thrown from the vehicle to the road below.

“I tried to hold my son tightly,” she remembers, “but the force of the van threw him from my grasp and he landed on the roadside.”

Amazingly, her son survived the incident that day, completely uninjured. But Shiuly was not so fortunate. Her body landed directly in the path of an oncoming truck and before she could scramble to the side of the road, the truck had crushed her left leg.

Shocked and afraid, the witnesses pulled Shiuly’s unconscious body into the van and rushed her to the hospital. After seven days of unsuccessful treatment, the doctors had no alternative but to amputate her leg below the knee. Shiuly was devastated. How could she care for her children without her leg? How could she do the work needed to help support her family?

Fortunately, the orthopedic surgeon was familiar with the Nalta Hospital Prosthetic Outreach Center (NHPOC) and



Mobility Camp Rally, Nalta, Bangladesh



Shiuly with her new artificial limb

advised Shiuly to go there for prosthetic care. Soon, Shiuly was fitted with a high-quality prosthetic limb by the Center and was walking the lanes of her village once more.

Without this crucial referral, Shiuly would have likely gone back to her village on crutches, suffering unnecessarily for months, or even years.

In an effort to reach out to amputees like Shiuly and other mobility disabled children and adults, Nalta Hospital and POF recently hosted a two-day “Mobility Camp”. Using a variety of advertising techniques to spread the word in rural and remote areas, the March 23-24 event was a great success. Sixty-five disabled children and adults and 50 family members participated in the camp at the hospital. The “Mobility Camp” attendees benefited from a variety of clinical and social programs including orthopedic evaluation and treatment by NHPOC staff, sports competitions for amputees, and an awareness-raising rally through the streets of Nalta. Many patients who received evaluations were scheduled for further treatment in the coming weeks.

“The ‘Mobility Camp’ clearly works in Bangladesh. It’s a way to reach out to rural amputees and other disabled children and adults in need of orthopedic assistance,” says Raymond Pye, POF’s Director of Programs.

Hundreds of Lives Changed in 2006

In 2006 the Prosthetics Outreach Foundation (POF) was able to bring hope and healing once more to hundreds of disabled children and adults in developing countries. The following is a brief summary of our key accomplishments:

- ☑ Restored mobility and independence to 486 disabled children and adults worldwide
- ☑ Provided life-changing orthopedic surgeries for 73 disabled children and adults free of charge
- ☑ Opened first prosthetics center in Sierra Leone, West Africa, serving 44 amputees, including first upper arm amputee (see picture on the right)
- ☑ Successfully completed three-year USAID-supported effort to locally manufacture orthotic components in Vietnam
- ☑ Introduced new, less expensive and more durable lightweight knee joints made in Vietnam



**Thank you for making our work possible
with your generous support!**

Restoring Mobility — Rebuilding Lives!



Toan awaits her new limb

**How little it takes
to change a life...**

\$1,000

Funds a weeklong outreach trip to rural amputees

\$500

Pays for two orthopedic surgeries

\$300

Provides a new artificial limb

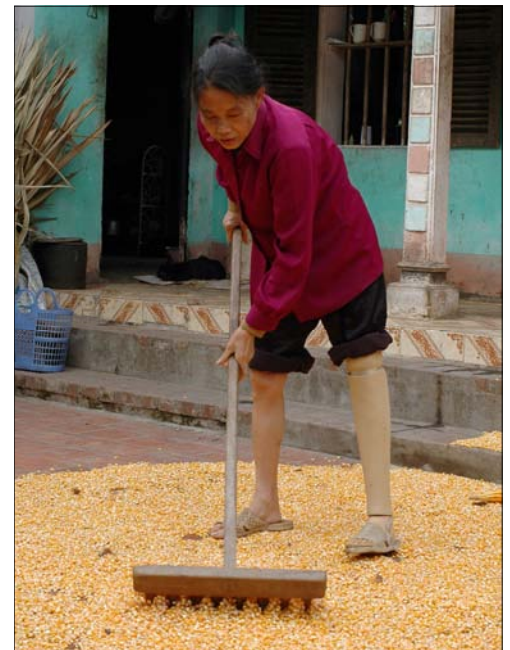
\$150

Covers clubfoot casting for one baby

\$50

Funds essential materials & supplies

Thank you!



Toan's chores are easier with her new limb

Help Change Lives! Donate Now!

Online: www.pofsea.org/donate.htm

By Mail: Prosthetics Outreach Foundation
400 East Pine Street, Suite 225, Seattle, WA 98122, USA

By Phone: (206) 726-1636



Prosthetics Outreach Foundation

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U.S.A.

Helping the Developing World Walk Again

On the Web @ www.pofsea.org

New! POF Begins Clubfoot Project in Vietnam

Little Toan watches inquisitively as the doctors wrap his leg with plaster bandages. He has no way of knowing that the treatment he is receiving will positively change his life. By the time Toan begins taking his first tentative steps, his feet will show no signs of the clubfoot deformity which severely bent his feet inward at birth.

In Vietnam, the life opportunities for a child born with clubfoot are bleak. This painful, highly visible congenital deformity turns otherwise healthy children into cripples, stealing from them their childhood and, often, their future. Yet it does not have to be this way. If properly managed soon after birth, clubfoot can be easily and affordably corrected before a child learns to walk. POF is undertaking a project in northern Vietnam to help local medical staff provide early intervention clubfoot treatment with the hope that no more children will be limited by this debilitating deformity.

(Continued on page 4)



Baby Toan receives clubfoot treatment from doctors at Ha Tay Orthopedic Center.

Read on...Help make dreams come true!