



Dear VMDT,

February 7<sup>th</sup> is the official date for Tet this year but the parties start well before then – I hope you can attend – especially all you Rats – it's your year to celebrate!

Wishing you all a wonderful 2008!

*Nancy*

**Included:**

- VMDT 10th Annual Tet Celebration
- MN Vietnamese Community Tet New Year Festival (Hoi Cho Tet)
- 2008 Tet Festival (Hoi Cho Tet) singers needed!!
- Vietnamese Language Classes in Northfield Open Enrollment!
- Adoption blog on the NY Times
- Article: Rains, floods ravage Vietnam
- Article: 4 Lanes of Hope in China and Vietnam

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**Your family is invited to join us for our 10th Annual VMDT Tet Celebration!**

January 26, 2008  
10:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
700 Snelling Avenue South  
St. Paul, MN, 55116

Reminder: MAIL your RSVP by January 20, 2008 (you should have received them via email). If you have any questions or should need more information, please let me know!  
We look forward to seeing you all there!

Peace,  
Caroline Ticarro-Parker 507-664-9558  
caroline@catalystfoundation.org

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**MN Vietnamese Community Tet New Year Festival (Hoi Cho Tet)**

Tet New Year Festival (Hội Chợ Tết), Saturday, February 2, 2008 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

New Location:

Hopkins High School  
2400 Lindbergh Drive  
Minnetonka, MN 55305

Free Admission and Free Parking!

The first 100 attendees will receive a telephone card to Vietnam.

Tet Festival Highlights include: Art & Crafts Children Activities, Sport Competitions, Lucky Money for Children (Lìxi) Flowers Arrangement, Youth & Children Entertainment, Vietnamese Idol Karaoke Contest, Vietnamese Poetry & Writing Contests, Community Resource Booths, Lion Dance, Vietnamese Food, High Achievement Contest For High School & College Students

<http://www.vietnam-minnesota.org/>

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## 2008 Tet Festival (Hoi Cho Tet) Singers Needed!!

From: melinhdance@yahoo.com

Subject: Be Chuc Tet song

Hi ,

I am looking for more kids to participate in this group song "Be Chuc Tet". Right now I have about 16 kids ages from 5 to 11. We are practicing at Chau Phat An every Sunday from 1 to 3pm. Can you see if you know any parents who wants to get their kids involve? I posted the lyric and mp3 for the song at <http://anna-anhly.com>

Thanks,

Linh

Note: This was forwarded by Phuong Dao, President of the Minnesota Vietnamese Association.

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## Vietnamese Language Classes in Northfield Open Enrollment!

Chao Parents,

Vietnamese language classes are from 4-5pm on Sundays and we meet at Laurel Carrington's house. The teachers this year are Lam, Lan, Khoi, Andrew, and Eric.

If you're interested in joining, let Laurel know by phone 507/ 663-6151 or email [carringt@stolaf.edu](mailto:carringt@stolaf.edu)

*Note: This information was provided by Lori Farmer – thanks Lori!*

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*Submitted by Kate O'Toole*

## Adoption blog on the NY Times

I'm sure some of you are already aware of this blog, but I've only just discovered it and I've bookmarked it so I can read it later when I'm not quite so swamped:

<http://relativechoices.blogs.nytimes.com/>

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*Submitted by Don Hickman*

## Rains, floods ravage Vietnam

11/15/07 - 07:05 AM

HANOI, Vietnam, Nov 15, 2007 (UPI via COMTEX) -- Four days of heavy rains and flooding in Vietnam have results in the deaths of 29 people and caused much damage, Vietnam News Agency reported. The country's lowlands and Central Highlands, which include Quang Tri, Da Nang and Thua Thien-Hue, are the most affected.

At least five people were missing, the office of the dike management and storm and flood control department said.

The report said 130 communes with more than 103,000 homes have been hit by flooding, forcing the evacuation of tens of thousands of people. Food reserves in some of these areas have been depleted, the report said.

Damage to rice, vegetable, cash crops and aquaculture ponds are reported to be extensive.

More rains are in the forecast.

U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Michael Michalak announced \$1 million in aid to buy blankets, mosquito nets and essential supplies, the report said.

"The flood-struck communities were, in many cases, just starting to recover from the damage caused by the August floods," the ambassador said.

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*Submitted by Kate O'Toole*

## **4 Lanes of Hope in China and Vietnam**

December 14, 2007

By DONALD GREENLEES

HONG KONG — On a frontier where Vietnamese and Chinese soldiers exchanged bullets in a short but bloody war three decades ago, construction workers from the two countries will soon join forces to build a highway that promises to bring new wealth to their once heavily guarded border regions.

Plans for a four-lane highway from Hanoi to Kunming are expected to clear the last hurdle on Friday, when the board of the Asian Development Bank gives the green light to a loan that will underwrite the Vietnamese side of the project.

By 2012, when the highway is supposed to be completed, cars, buses and trucks should be able to speed people and goods between northern [Vietnam](#) and southern China, opening the prospect of a significant new economic development zone in Asia.

A journey that now takes three days by truck could take just nine hours. Goods made in China's Yunnan Province would have quick access to the Vietnamese seaport of Haiphong, and Vietnamese exporters should be able to reach untapped markets in China.

"Both countries are reaping the fruits of peace and cooperation," said Ayumi Konishi, the Asian Development Bank's country director in Vietnam. "In one generation, they have moved from tanks and troops to trade and tourism."

In a meeting Friday at the headquarters of the multilateral lender in Manila, the board is expected to approve its biggest single-project loan — \$1.1 billion — to finance the start of work next year on a 152-mile stretch of the highway from Hanoi to Lao Cai on the border, bank officials said in interviews. The Vietnamese government is contributing \$100 million to the low-interest loan, to be paid off over 32 years.

The construction is to add a section to the ambitious Asian Highway program under which 27 Asian countries have pledged to build an 87,000-mile network of roads that meet minimum uniform standards.

Barry Cable, a [United Nations](#) transport infrastructure expert in Bangkok, said the economic returns to countries on typical highway projects in the region "are 5 to 10 times higher than the investments being made."

The Vietnamese section of the project is to be designated Asian Highway No. 14. It is to link to a highway under construction on the Chinese side of the border at Lao Cai. That area saw some of the fiercest fighting in the brief war of 1979, in which Hanoi and Beijing tested each other's mettle in a contest for strategic influence in Southeast Asia.

Both governments are now vastly more interested in markets than in strategic jostling. The highway is one of several transport infrastructure projects integrating the economies of northern Vietnam with southern China. It is seen by government and Asian Development Bank officials as a vital spur to the region's growth, particularly lifting the pace of development in the four poorest provinces of Vietnam.

"I think the integration will be of mutual benefit," said Ho Quang Minh, a director general in Vietnam's Ministry of Planning and Investment, in a telephone interview from Hanoi. "Southern China is a very big potential market, not just for Vietnam, but for other countries. On the other hand, China can utilize the seaport facilities in northern Vietnam and obtain a short cut to other countries of Southeast Asia."

The Vietnamese government and the Asian Development Bank hope that replacing the existing Hanoi-to-Kunming road — a narrow, dangerous and congested artery that winds through towns and over many small bridges along the Red River — will be the catalyst for the establishment of industrial parks that will attract multinational corporations. Traffic on the route is forecast to rise from about 3 million vehicles a year now to 5.5 million in 2012 and 17 million in 2022.

With rising costs in China, improved transport connections could entice more investors into Vietnam, where lower wages give workers a competitive edge.

The Vietnamese government has placed a high priority of the development of its northern provinces. The four provinces the highway traverses — Vinh Phuc, Phu Tho, Yen Bai and Lao Cai — have poverty rates of up to 34 percent, compared with a national average of 20 percent. The construction of the highway is expected to significantly cut poverty rates.

But it will come at some social cost. Although an environmental impact study by the Asian Development Bank found no threat to any significant natural sites, the road will require the demolition of about 1,900 homes and force the resettlement of some 25,000 people. The route follows a southern branch of the ancient Silk Road.

John Cooney, director for infrastructure for Southeast Asia with the Asian Development Bank, said the Vietnamese government and the bank had drawn a relocation strategy aimed at minimizing the risks of splitting communities and ensuring that individuals who relocate are not worse off.

“This project will transform northwestern Vietnam from one of the countries poorest and most isolated regions to a rapidly developing area tapped into the dynamic growth of Hanoi, Haiphong and Kunming,” he said.

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