

# The Alderman Newsflash

The newsletter by the residents, for the residents September 2016

## Adventures in Asia

By Avery Jackson

As some of you may know, Rusty Blix, his wife Kay, Avery Jackson and several other Americans were visiting Northern Vietnam to teach English the last week of July!



For five days we were in the Thái Nguyên University where we helped Vietnamese English teachers learn classroom tools and help them with their pronunciations of English words, as well as clear up some cultural misconceptions. This was a HUGE deal, because this is the first professional teaching interaction ever staged with this university.

After warming up to us, the teachers began sharing some of the things they had learned about “foreigners” (Americans). They had been taught to never ask us questions about our personal lives, because Americans considered that rude and did not like to share personal information! After we cleared that up, we really had a good time. It was amazing learning about their personal lives, their love of teaching, and the local culture. Several of the girls traveled four hours a day to attend our class, and when they got home, they still had a family to take care of.

We had been teaching English learning exercises with the teachers to show them what to do with their students, and one of our group members, Kim, was demonstrating the many types of short dialogs the students can have with each other. The first three lines were scripted to start the conversation, and the responses after were add-libbed:

**Kim: I don't have any money.**

**Teacher: I don't have any money either.**

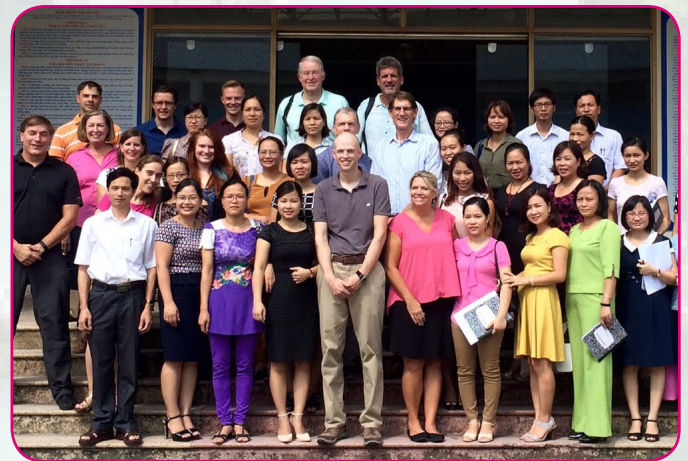
**Kim: Why don't you have any money?**

**Teacher: Because I am a teacher!**

**(Insert tons of laughter!)**

For those of you who are a teacher, or who know teachers, you recognize this conversation! It was an incredible bonding moment and really showed all of us how similar we really are, despite living in totally different worlds.

This was an amazing trip, and we appreciate the love, prayers and support you showed us while we were gone!



**Our first meeting with the university and the teachers from all over North Vietnam!**



Rusty was one of the most loved by all of the teachers! The teachers were a little intimidated by him at first, but soon he was the center for many photographs!



We were served many delicious meals! During one notable dinner, we were served dog. While it may have been chewier than beef, it certainly was not bad! Chef Mary may need to try and get the recipe! (Don't worry, of course I'm kidding!)

The Vietnamese people are hard workers. Typically, both parents have a job and as a family own a small business. Children are expected to do well in school as well as help with the family business.



**Most Unusual Purchase: Snake Wine**  
Popular in the local markets, these bottles of rice wine with a once living cobra and scorpion in its mouth. The woman who sold it to us was at least 75+ and said she drinks this wine daily and rubs it on her skin for blemishes and arthritis. Even though we are skeptical if this medicinal wine works, her skin was beautiful.

## October Birthdays

**Olive Scancarella - Oct. 4**

**Mary Ann Edwards - Oct. 14**

**Bea Brown - Oct. 21**

**Joyce Demaria - Oct. 27**



## Staff Members

**Samantha Crittenden - Oct. 16**

**Don Fitts - Oct 14**

**Lisa Ervin - Oct. 22**

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