



April / May / June 2007 No.14

# Solar Serve News

Dear friends,

The mosquitoes, ants and gecko's are back again. Outside the birds are busy to make their nests and suddenly the sun breaks through the clouds. Nature announced the end of the raining season! Immediately we moved the solar cookers outside into the sun, water started to boil and the coffee pot began to percolate. You could feel the excitement! It is wonderful to work again under the Sun.

## 50 parabolic and 100 box cookers

At the end of last year the leaders of Solar Serve came together in order to make plans for the new year. They had the impression that 2007 will be a year for the people in and around Danang. Later this impression was confirmed by dr.Hung, who asked Solar Serve to work this year along the beach of Danang and at the nearby mountains where minority groups and poor people live. The leaders decided to help the people with 50 parabolic cookers and 100 box cookers and they will evaluate later in the year if more cookers are needed. A new road was built near the beach of Danang which leads to the ancient town Hoi An. Using the solar cookers along this road will not only be a help for the people, but it will also be an attraction for the many tourist traveling from Danang to Hoi An.



## New box cooker

In our last newsletter we told you about our new box solar cooker. Our staff have been working and researching diligently. They used different molds for making the inner and outside box from aluminum. When they worked for weeks on this new model, it became their own creation, which made them very excited. Here two pictures of the box solar cooker or see for more pictures on our web site <http://www.vietnamsolarserve.org/20mould/photo1.html>



## Factory closed

We wanted to pay our yearly rent for the parabolic factory in Tamky, but the landlord changed his mind and wanted to sell the place and ignored our three-year contract. The next day he told us that he had a huge debt in the bank and that the police wanted to close the factory. Immediately we moved everything out of the factory, although we thought he made up this story in order to force us out. After that we felt that we should move the whole factory to Danang city, which is more suitable for transport, buying materials, selling our product and easy to get labour. Everything is in an early stage and we have to consider many new things. At this time of writing we have not found a new place in Danang yet. Please stand with us!



## New machine for parabolic cookers

Dr.Hung of the University of Danang signed a new contract with us for five years. We were very pleased! Dr.Hung is also the director of the Research Center for Pressure Equipment and Renewable Energy, located at the University of Technology in Danang. He invented a new machine, which presses material into parabolic shapes. His machine was made last year in



Hanoi. Unfortunately, some material like stainless steel was hard to shape, but aluminum formed itself well. A special thing about the new parabolic cooker is that it can be made in six separated parts, which is easy for transport. For more information please contact dr.Hung Duong Hoang (see for his address and e-mail: [www.vietnamsolarserve.org/people.html](http://www.vietnamsolarserve.org/people.html)) Here are two pictures of his new machine and parabolic solar cooker. For more pictures see our web site: [www.vietnamsolarserve.org/22mouldpar/photo1.html](http://www.vietnamsolarserve.org/22mouldpar/photo1.html)



## Vietnamese businessmen

A Vietnamese man from Ivory Coast introduced us to two overseas Vietnamese businessmen. They were very interested in building parabolic cookers and wanted to set up a small factory in HCM city. They asked us for help. A few weeks ago they told us that they had already set up a factory. Their purpose is to do business with neighboring countries in promoting and selling parabolic cookers. There will be an open market. (Read more about business experiences of solar companies in China: [http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/Sangli\\_Solar\\_Energy](http://solarcooking.wikia.com/wiki/Sangli_Solar_Energy) We wish them all the best.



## 'Our 1 world' organization

Cathy Lam, an American-Vietnamese woman, sponsored several parabolic cookers last year. She made her own web site <http://www.our1world.org/> So, read about her family and their love for the people of Vietnam. (Left a picture of one of her posters, promoting the use of solar cookers). Mr. Bich, our director of Solar Serve was invited with one of Cathy's staff to attend a conference in Hue city for meetings with Vietnamese and foreign organizations.



## Helping people

We want to make it clear again that our purpose of having a project and running a factory is only for promoting solar cookers and helping the local people with the use of it. If we can make profits with our factory, it will be used for helping people who cannot afford to buy a solar cooker. We do not ask for donations but in the last few months we had several people who helped us financially. We mentioned already about Our 1 World organization and also a friend from Thailand asked his friends to sponsor several box cookers. Lately we received an e-mail from a young Vietnamese man in Hanoi. He had been reading our website and offered to help Solar Serve with a financial gift. We were very touched. Great to see local people helping each other.

## Regional workshop from 16-17 April

Mister Tuan was introduced in our last letter. He had to move out of his small working place and we offered him to move into our information room. Besides his normal work of repairing household equipment, we asked him to make a mechanical clock from bicycle parts for our new community solar cooker. He was able to make the clock by watching pictures we took in Spain and using an English construction manual (even his English was limited). Amazing! Mr. Bich, our director will attend the Asia Regional Solar Cooking and Food Processing Workshop from 16-17 April in Kathmandu (more on our web site: <http://www.vietnamsolarserve.org/eIndex.html> and click on 'Invitation Regional Workshop'). Mr. Bich hopes to get more information in how to build the 8 -10m2 community solar cooker and how to attach the mechanical clock.



## Wonderful visitors

Sometimes foreign visitors want to serve the Vietnamese people by doing some practical work. A group from the Philippines came to visit us and helped to paint the hallway of a restaurant where disabled people were working. They were also able to meet local people and to visit several high places like Bana and Marble mountain. A few months ago a tour guide walked out of the airport and passed by our information room. Immediately he wanted to bring groups to Danang in order for them to see the solar cookers project. Even two Vietnamese who were working for a German company wanted to make relationship with us for future purposes. Sometimes we had visitors who sponsored our project. They wanted to see the results. Unfortunately, we are often working in remote areas, which make it not possible to take visitors with us. Nevertheless, it is great to have all these wonderful people around us and we want to make time for them if our schedule and work allows it.



## Solar links

If you want to know more about solar cooking, and to explore the world of solar cooking, you should open the next link, <http://solarcooking.org/> You will be amazed of the different kind of models and how many people are using it. It will be better if you make one for yourself or family. It is a great tool to educate children at home or in school and making them aware of the environment. Two carton boxes and a sheet of foil will do a lot. You can find enough plans on this Solar Cookers International link. They put all this information together and sometimes in your own language. We are also thankful for Solar Cooker Workgroup Sliedrecht Netherlands who inspired us in building and using solar cookers. They have their own web site, with useful hints for using their Dierckx type box cooker, see: <http://www.solarcooker.nl/index.php?lang=uk>

This is all the news for now. Thanks a lot for your friendship and we hope you will stand with us in the coming solar months. Warm solar greetings,

The Solar Serve family

**Called to Serve**



# Danang Gateway News:

## Youths of Peace Boat visited Danang

The Peace Boat berthed at Danang's Tien Sa Seaport on 4 March, carrying 750 youths and other visitors. This was its 56th visit to Danang so far and the first in 2007. On the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of March, the Japanese youths and students enjoyed Danang's tourist spots and took part in cultural exchange programs, including music and dance performances, games, a food festival and a camping night on Non Nuoc Beach. They also helped in cleaning Danang's streets.



## A Green-Clean-Beautiful Sunday

The Danang local authorities issued plans for organizing a "Green-Clean-Beautiful Sunday" in 2007. The city authorities will give wide publicity through meetings, the media and posters. The aim is to change the bad habits and behavior effecting the living environment, to suitably use and save natural resources, protect and improve the environment, and build civilized and environment friendly lifestyles. Localities will mobilize local people to plant trees, care for and protect street trees and prevent and denounce people cutting trees and branches.

## Donations for the poor

Donations were given by the Australia's AOG World Relief Organization to the Danang Children's Assistance Fund to care for poor children and assist disadvantaged families. The money will be used to assist 200 pupils to buy schoolbags, books and notebooks and insurance for 500 poor students and some children with dangerous diseases. It will partly fund members of the Blind Persons Association and give soft loans to poor families having children for pig and cow raising. On the occasion of New year several Vietnamese and foreign organizations gave gifts to poor people whose houses were destroyed in typhoon Xangsane, and also to the lonely elderly, disabled people, orphans and children of the village of Hope. Some gifts included 20 kg of rice, confectionery, "banh tet" and blankets.

## Central Vietnam hot spot for foreign tourists

Da Nang, Hue and Hoi An became among the top travel places in the country for foreign tourists this year. In the first three months of 2007, a total of seven international cruise ships have called on Da Nang's Tien Sa port, carrying 3,100 tourists. Three more cruise ships with over 1,000 people are scheduled to moor at the Da Nang port later this month. In 2006, Danang welcomed 774,000 visitors (including 258,000 international and 516,000 domestic), a year-on-year increase of 17.3%. Danang's target is to welcome 910,000 visitors in 2007



## Vietnam man sleepless for 27 years, but still healthy

Nguyen Van Kha, a chicken farmer, and carpenter never slept since 1979. At night, he watches TV until 9 pm before lying down to rest. When he closes his eyes for a short while, he feels a pricking sensation and must open them. He has tried western and herbal remedies but all in vain. Strangely, he rarely falls sick. The 65-year-old Thai Ngoc, a farmer near Danang city also suffered the same condition since 1973. He is also still healthy. He can farm like any other and carries two 50kg bags of fertilizer for 4km everyday.

## Four dead in tragic oil tank blast in Danang

An oil tank exploded at an oil storage depot in Danang on March 22, killing four welders and injuring eight others who were working on its lid. The explosion at 7:40 am torn through the 5-millimeter thick lid of the 15-meter high tank, which can store 12,500 liters of liquid, in the Nuoc Man storage depot of Danang City. A fire broke out and lasted for about five minutes. The tank was in the final stages of construction along with four others. The constructor had filled the tank with water to test it. The report quoted a technician as saying that some gasoline had been mistakenly pumped inside the tank along with water and welding sparks ignited the explosion



## Plans to build a new railway

A plan has been approved to build a new rail link between Hanoi to Ho Chi Minh City. It could cut one of the great 1,600km railway journeys of the world nearly two days to less than 10 hours. The government wants the link built in just six years. The fastest train takes 29 hours and the slowest 40. The single-track line needs major improvements. Japanese and South Korean governments are offering assistance. It will be an impressive achievement if the line is finished by the six years deadline.