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# A Tale of One Village



November 2010



**Dear friend,**

Over the years we have told you about the importance of the relationships we have developed with our Vietnamese counterparts. Below is the story of just one of our partners, Mrs. Pham Thi Loi, Chair of the Women's Union of Ba Bich village.

Mrs. Loi is Kor, one of the three ethnic tribes living in the mountains of Quang Ngai province. In January, 2005, we funded a micro-credit program in this village and since then more than 100 poor Kor women have used their loans to raise cows, pigs and Acacia trees. Mrs. Loi has administered this fund since then from her office in Ba To town, six miles away. Ba Bich village is cut off from regular commerce by a river situated between Ba Bich and a crude dirt road. Periodically the villagers will build a bamboo bridge spanning this river but these bridges get swept away during monsoon floods.

In the dry months Mrs. Loi wades across this river and then walks the six miles into town in weather that can reach well over 100 degrees with matching humidity. However, it is during the monsoon season that her daily trip into Ba To town becomes truly dangerous. The river rises more than forty feet during the monsoon floods and the only way Mrs. Loi can reach the other side to begin walking to Ba To town is to swim these treacherous currents while clinging to a float. She accepts these hardships and dangers because of her commitment to helping the poor women from Ba Bich through our micro-credit program there.



*Mrs. Loi fording the river from Ba Bich.*



*This boy touches the bike in disbelief. It is beyond the children's wildest dreams to ever own a bike. They are always stored inside, for fear of losing one.*

Your donation of \$50 will provide a bicycle for a child who walks miles to school. Your donation of \$300 will provide a loan for a poor woman in Ba Bich or a similar village, and finally, your contribution of \$1,200 will provide a Compassion House for a family affected by Agent Orange.

**Please consider a generous contribution to these projects and be assured they are well managed.**

In peace,

Roy M. (Mike) Boehm  
Executive Director  
Madison Quakers, Inc.



**THE MY LAI PEACE PARK PROJECT** A project of the Madison Quakers

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# A Day in the Life of the residents of Ba Bich village

Fulfilling basic needs like preparing food and washing clothes takes so much more time than we could imagine.



Woman gathering worms and grubs for food.



Kor women washing clothes in the river.



Young boy washes dishes with water from an irrigation ditch.



Typical rudimentary cooking stove forms the center of the kitchen.



Taking time to remove leaches is part of typical life in the mountains. Here Mike Boehm picks leaches off his ankles.



Women's handmade baskets are used to gather wood, vegetables and rice