

LAOTIAN AMERICAN SOCIETY

6th Annual Charity Ball

Connecting the Lao Past with the Future

ເຊື່ອມໂຍງອະດີດສູ່ອະນາຄົດ



NOVEMBER 20, 2010
Ashiana Banquet Hall
Norcross, GA

Event Program

5:45 pm	Registration
6:00	Mingling / Networking / Appetizers
6:25	Blessing Dance by Elizabeth "Bee" Vichathep
6:30	Welcome Address from Event Chairs
6:45	Speech by Meiling A. and Noel K.
6:50	Woodwind Instrument Performance by Somlan K.
7:00	Dinner Live Music by: Caffeine
7:25	Performance from Royal Lao Classical Dancers
7:30	Guest Speaker
7:45	Performance from Royal Lao Classical Dancers
7:50	Guest Speaker
7:55	LAS Natasinh Dance Group
8:00	Thavisouk Phrasavath
8:10	Opening of the Dance Floor
8:30	Music by Caffeine and Ketsana
9:30	Door Prizes
10:00	Raffle Drawing
12:00 am	Program End



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Volunteers and Credits

Food Department

Nang Phouangphet	Kim Ting Pathammavong	Phetsamone Vongkhamsy	Krista Banda
Pian Phouangphet	Souk Khaikham	Xao Vongkhamsy	Neo Praseuth
Dao Malaythong	Glen Hatsavongsa	Douang Vongprachanh	Bounthom Vongkhamchanh
Noy Lounnarath Bozarth	Julee Keovixay	Vee Soukavong	Khamsouk Vongkhamchanh
Nok Chantharaboutda	Nancy Chai	Michael Tanrattana	Yana Soukavong
Chey Voravong	Pikul Kongphachit	Sarah Phongsavath	
Christy Bounsouk	John Kongphachit	Joy Fongsamouth	

Desserts

Keomany Chantharath	Pikul Kongphachit	Ott Vongprachanh
Lendall Chantharath	Toy Pomsopone	

Food Donations and Other Preparation

Ouday Arounnarath	Liam Kenemanisoth	Lao Video	Atlanta Asian Foods
Joy Arounnarath	Thip Athakhanh	Golden 7 Restaurant	

Decor

Ashley Thweatt	Keomany Chantharath	Lendall Chantharath
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Hosting and Check-In

Noy Lounnarath	Kassie Venita Vongsitthy	Singh Lo
Ladda Indhara	Kim Liemkeo	Paula Phetsadasack
Phouthone Nguyen	Khammy Viengvilay	

Performers

Caffeine Band	Ketsana Vilaylack	LAS Natasinh Dance Group
Keck Pathammavong	Lao Bamboo Band	Indara Indy Malaythong
Dang Pathammavong	Somlan Charlie Khonesavanh	Intila Tila Malaythong
Sean Pathammavong	Sinsamouth Vongsavath	Sarah Phouangphet
Paul Air-Noy Malaythong	Suriya	Emily Lounnarath
Noel S. Kenemanisoth	Phon	Mollie Chanmaly Pathammavong
Voranath Chanthavong	Soukeo	Ariana Kingmala Pathammavong
Jay	Royal Lao Classical Dancers	Elizabeth Bee Vichatthep
Joy Somphon		Nina Siharath
Vanh Phetvixay		
Phanh Phetvixay		
Khoun Taysavang		

In Kind Donations

Vatsana Salon	Beads After Beads	Channapha Khamvongsa
Super H	Atlanta Asian Foods	
Oriental Food Mart	Michelle Le	

Other Support

Event Photography	Cookie Morey	Program Book Printing
Philip Murray	Amphone Sengchanh	United Parcel Service
Donald Douglas		
	Caffeine Band Gear Rental	Program Book and Photos
Lao Language Translations	Voranath Chanthavong	Boon Vong
Archan Bounnong		

Event Co-Chairs

Boon Vong

"I would like to thank everyone on the planning committee and the LAS family for their support in this year's event. One of my goals has always been to tell others of our stories, struggles, and talents. Being an artist is about more than creating work, it is about sharing it, and we as Lao people have a unique voice."



Boon has been a part of LAS for over 5 years, supporting the group with event photography, website duties, and other community activities both locally and nationally.

Born in Sithanthay, Vientiane, Laos, Boon came to America with his family after a stay in Nongkhai refugee camp in Thailand.

He would like to thank his parents, family, and church sponsors for helping cultivate a young boy's interest in the arts.

Boon's Artwork, Photographs, and Travel Documentation can always be seen on his website:

www.b-vong.com



Kim Ting Pathammavong

"I've learned so much about myself and the never ending kindness of the friends and supporters around us. So many people have volunteered and donated because they also feel that by giving, it is for our children, our spirit, and our future."

Kim has been instrumental in the mission and promotion of LAS in the Atlanta area and abroad. In addition to various LAS community functions and events, she has also enjoyed teaching the LAS dance team traditional Laotian Folk dances. Under her direction, the LAS Natasinh Group has performed at more than 30 events for over 20,000 people.

Kim graduated from the University of Milwaukee in Wisconsin with a Bachelor's Degree in Health Allied. She relocated to Georgia in 2002 with her husband Keck Pathammavong and two beautiful daughters Arianna age 14 and Mollie who is 10 years old. Teaching and coaching the dance team has brought Kim a lot of joy and she hopes to continue her efforts with LAS for many more years to come.

Guest of Honor



Thavisouk Phrasavath

Active within the Laotian American Community in the U.S. and Canada, Thavisouk Phrasavath is a creative consultant for developing Lao TV and other media.

During his early years in Brooklyn, he served as the primary liaison/ translator for Youth and Family Crisis intervention through the Church Avenue Merchants Block Association and working with the police department as a liaison and interpreter for the Lao community in dealing with domestic and gang-related issues. Formerly an Area Policy Board Member, Thavisouk has consulted for the NYC Board of Education.

Thavisouk's film work extends into writing, editing, directing and shooting. His projects as editor include Mira Sorvino's directorial debut MAKING FAMOUS, as well as SUMMER SCHOOL, CUBA LIBRE, AMERICANOS, STREAMING WITH THE PREZ, VIETNAM ON THE CUSP, SOUND PAINTING, and most recently, GOLDEN VENTURE, which was widely recognized and distributed. Thavi has also directed and edited music videos for independent artists, is a published poet, and has won awards for his painting and illustration work.

Thavisouk Phrasavath graduated with honors from Pratt Institute with a degree in Electrical Engineering.

THE BETRAYAL (Nerakhoon) is Thavi's first film as both subject and filmmaker. It was nominated for Best Documentary at the 2010 Academy Awards and recently won the Primetime Emmy Award in the category for Exceptional Merit in Nonfiction Filmmaking.

2010 LAS Officers



Neo Douangpraseuth
President

Neo Praseuth was born in Vientiane, Laos. Since 2003 Neo has been an active volunteer and also served on the LAS board. He held various positions from Director of Education, Scholarship Committee, and Treasurer.

Aside from nonprofit volunteer work Neo participated in the Host Family Program at the University of Mississippi and the University of Southern Mississippi where he hosted international exchange students from Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, and Brazil. He was also the Treasurer for the both the Arizona State's Asian Students Association and the ASU Fencing club.

Neo attended Arizona State University and the University of Mississippi and earned his bachelor's degree in finance with a concentration on Southeast Asian studies as well as a life long fan of great writers from Mississippi. Neo is excited and inspired by members of LAS.



Serichanhto Noel Kenemanisoht
Secretary

Noel currently serves as Secretary for the LAS board. Noel currently teaches in Cobb County, sings in the local band, Caffeine, and she has been active in the Adopted Teens

Empowerment and Mentoring Organization mentoring adopted teens ages 12-19 for several years. The reason she is a part of the Laotian American Society Charity Ball this year, is because she wants to educate others about the Laotian culture and to pay tribute to those unsung heroes within the community.



Noy Lounnarath Bozarth
Vice President

Welcome and thank you to all my family and friends for supporting the LAS 2010 Fundraiser Ball. I hope you are enjoying the diversity of our Laotian culture in the entertainment, performances, and the

authentic dishes prepared especially for you tonight. The purpose of this fabulous event is not merely to help raise funds to support programs for Laotian-Americans here in Georgia, but also to generate cultural awareness throughout the communities and businesses where we live and work.

Volunteering with LAS is not only enjoyable, but deeply rewarding because it affords me the opportunity to work with and to meet so many talented people. Through these relationships, I benefit and can help empower others in the community to achieve their life goals.



Meiling Arounnarath
Director of Education

Meiling joined LAS in spring of 2010 but has had ties to the organization since 2007. Meiling gave the keynote speech at the LAS Education Award Ceremony in 2007, and she was a volunteer writer/editor for the

nationally distributed "Lao Roots" magazine from 2007-09. Meiling was born and raised in Atlanta. She hopes to inspire Laotian youth to pursue higher education, and she is excited to help the Laotian community gain more exposure as well as help the community strengthen and build more solidarity from within.

Planning Committee

Dao Malaythong
Entertainment / PR / Marketing

Amphone Sengchanh
Advisor

Ashley Thweatt
Decor

Cookie Morey
Finance

Nang Phouangphet
Food and Refreshments

Noel S. Kenemanisoht
Music Schedule

Noy Lounnarath Bozarth
Ticketing / Registration

Fawn Nguyen
Independent Auditor



Nang Phouangphet
Lao and Asian Cuisine

Nang brings a passion and expertise in Lao cuisine from the restaurant world. She has helped out LAS on many occasions and is also involved in the Jai Lao Foundation, a non profit charitable organization of volunteers dedicated to alleviate economic hardships for Laotians in Laos and in the United States. Nang's daughter Sarah, is also a dancer in the LAS Natasinh Dance Group.



Ashley Thweatt
Decor

Ms. Ashley Thweatt is a native of Rockville, Maryland and still a relative newcomer to the Atlanta area. She is currently employed as a Mechanical Designer at Heery International Inc.

Her interest in working with LAS is rooted in her natural infatuation with the human race. She came looking for a way to become involved in her new community. "Being an American I can appreciate a group that is preserving their culture and traditions through groups like LAS."

Ashley participated in the Dragon Boat Race where the LAS NAGA Fireballs placed 3rd in their division. She enjoys learning and enjoying Laotian culture, music, food and dance.



Amphone Sengchanh
Advisor

Amphone was born in Laos, Banh Thathkao, Vientiane. At the age of 9, he left Laos with his family for Nongkhai, Thailand. Amphone and his family first settled in Murfreesboro, his first hometown, which he still considers home. His second hometown is Cornelia, GA, graduating from Habersham Central High School in the class of 1984.

Amphone is a proud supporter of LAS, a board member of LANA (Laotian American National Alliance), and other community based organizations in the Atlanta area. Amphone has lived and worked in Atlanta since 1988. He is the proud father of Sonya and Alexis Sengchanh.



*Dee
Thai*
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At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lit the flame within us. We are privileged to have the opportunity to study; the freedom to follow our own thoughts and inspirations in a land with a generous and forward-looking government. It's never too late to be what you might have been. Dare to dream, the sky is the limit!

**LAS does what it can
For the betterment of the Laotian American community
I do what I can to show support.**

Ann Rithmixay

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Sylvie Keophilavanh
Store Manager

ອົງກອນເພື່ອສິ່ງຄົມລາວ-ອາເມຣິກາ

ສະມາຄົມ ເພື່ອນຳກັນເຮັດ, ຜູ້ສະນັບສະຫນູນ ແລະ ສະມາຊິກສູນເຊີນທັງຫລາຍ

ອົງກອນເພື່ອສິ່ງຄົມລາວອາເມຣິກາ(LAS)ມີຄວາມຄິດເຫັນທີ່ຈະຈັດງານທີ່ເປັນເອກະລັກຂອງພວກເຮົາ ເພື່ອຫາລາຍໄດ້ປະຈຳປີ 6 ສະຖະໄດ້ຈັດຮື້ມໃນວັນ ເສົາ ວັນທີ 20 ເດືອນ 11 ປີ 2010 (Saturday, November 20, 2010) ພວກເຮົາຫວັງວ່າ ພວກທ່ານທີ່ໄປຮ່ວມຈະມາທຽວຊົມ ແລະ ສະນັບສະຫນູນງານສະແດງ ວັດທະນະຊື່ນ, ອາຫານ, ແລະ ການບັນເທີງມວນຊົນ ຂອງ ລາວເຮົາ.

ຈຸດປະສົງຂອງງານສະແດງດັ່ງກ່າວນີ້ກໍ່ເພື່ອສຳຮັດສາທາລະນະກັບສະຫນູນໂຄງການຕ່າງໆ ເພື່ອມາພົວພັນການສຶກສາ ຈົນເຖິງ ການສະແດງສິລະປະວັດທະນະຊື່ນຜູ້ເຮົາເຮົາຕ່າງໆ. ພວກເຮົາຫວັງວ່າ ດ້ວຍການສະນັບສະຫນູນ ແລະ ການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອຂອງພວກທ່ານ, ພວກເຮົາຈະສາມາດນຳເກີດເຮືອງງາຍເສຍພວກເຮົາ ເພື່ອຕອບສະຫນອງຄຸນຄ່າຂອງພວກເຮົາ ແລະ ສິ່ງເສີມການສຶກສາ ແລະ ຈັດຫາພະນັກລາວ-ອາເມຣິກາໃນອົງເອກະລັກຂອງພວກເຮົາ.

ໂຄງການແລະເງິນທຶນການສຶກສາສະຕັ້ງວິທະຍາໄລຂອງພວກເຮົາ ກໍ່ຍັງດຳເນີນໄປຢ່າງເຂັ້ມແຂງ ຍ້ອນຄວາມດູ່ອມັນສະຫວັນ ຂອງຜູ້ສາສາສະນິກ ແລະ ຜູ້ສະນັບສະຫນູນທີ່ໃຈບຸນທັງຫລາຍ. ເຖິງແມ່ນວ່າຈະມີວິນາຍາກໆ ມາມາແກ່ກິດກໍ່ຕາມ, ເມື່ອລະດູຮອບທີ່ຜ່ານມານີ້, ອົງກອນຂອງພວກເຮົາໄດ້ໄຫຼ່ເງິນສົມມັກສາສາກວ່າ \$5,000,000 ແມ່ນັກຮຽນ ວິທະຍາໄລ ແລະ ໄດ້ໃຫ້ທຶນແກ່ນັກຮຽນຊັ້ນ 8-12 ໂລຍະ 6 ປີທີ່ຜ່ານມານີ້ ໂຄງການຂອງພວກເຮົາໄດ້ໃຫ້ທຶນ ລວມທັງຫມົດຫລາຍກວ່າ \$25,000,000.

ຄະນະນາຍົກຄະສິນຂອງພວກເຮົາໄດ້ໃຫ້ມາການສະແດງຫລາຍກວ່າ 10 ຄັ້ງ ໃນປີທີ່ຜ່ານມາ. ໂດຍມີຄືນ ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມທັງຫມົດຫລາຍກວ່າ 20,000 ຄົນ. ໂຄງການຍັງມີຜົນສຳເລັດດັ່ງກ່າວນີ້ ໄດ້ສອບໃຫ້ອິນຊິນຊິນ ກຸ້ວຄວາມເອົາອັບ ໃນການສືບທອດອິດສະຫຼະພາບ ແລະ ຮຽນຮູ້ການເຮັດວຽກຊັບພະຍາກອນ, ສ້າງຄວາມເຫມາະກັນໃຈໃຫ້ໂດຍສະເພາະ ແລະ ຍົກຍົກຮັກສາມໍລະດົກແລະປະວັດສາດຂອງຄົນເຮົາ.

ບັນດາຜູ້ຮ່ວມວຽກງານຫລາຍລະດັບໄດ້ສືບຕໍ່ເພີ່ມຂຶ້ນ ເນື່ອງຈາກວ່າອົງກອນຂອງພວກເຮົາໄດ້ເປັນເສົາຫລັກສູນຊັ້ນຂອງລາວເອເຊຍຫລືເອເຊຍແຫ່ງຫມູ່ມາກະມະຫາສະຫມຸດຢາຊີຟິກທີ່ຢູ່ໃນອົງເອກະລັກຂອງພວກເຮົາ. ພວກເຮົາຈະສືບຕໍ່ສະນັບສະຫນູນສູນຊັ້ນເພື່ອນຳກັນເຮັດໃນຮູມຊົນຫລາຍໆຄັ້ງເພື່ອເພີ່ມຂຶ້ນຢ່າງໄວວາມີຕໍ່ໄປ. ອີກທັງ ຈຳນວນພິລິທີ່ຊື່ຈາກການສຳຫລວດພົນສະເມີຍຂອງປີ 2010 ຈະໄດ້ພວກເຮົາຊື່ຈຳນວນທີ່ແທ້ຈິງ, ແຕ່ວ່າ ພວກເຮົາຄູ່ແລ້ວວ່າ ມະສອນແອັດແລນຕາ ແລະ ສັດຈໍເຊີນີ້ ມີຄຸນຄ່າຊາວເອເຊຍທີ່ທ່ານສືບໄດ້ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມທີ່ ສຳຄັນຕໍ່ປະເທດອາເມຣິກາ ຢ່າງຫລວງຫລາຍ.

ຕັ້ງແຕ່ບັນດາວຽກງານຂອງອົງກອນຂອງພວກເຮົາ ກໍ່ສິ່ງງານສະແດງຕ່າງໆ ແລະ ໃຫ້ການສຶກສາເກຢິນເຮົາທາງດ້ານວັດທະນະຊື່ນລາວ-ອາເມຣິກາ. ຄົນສ່ວນຫລາຍບໍ່ເຂົ້າໃຈເລີຍວ່າ ການແກ່ກິດຈະກຳຂອງພວກເຮົາ ກໍ່ສິ່ງງານສຳລັບພະອົບທາງດ້ານການເມັດສາດແລະເຂດກຸ່ມກິດໃນ ກ້າຍຄູມກີ 1970 ພວກເຮົາໄດ້ເລີ່ມເຮັດໃນອິດທິພົນໃນປີນີ້ ແລະ ສືບຕໍ່ຊ່ວຍສ້າງປະເທດສັນຫຍິບໃຫ້ດ້ວຍການໃຫ້, ຈຸດເສຍສິດ,ແລະ ຮວມມືຫລາຍກວ່າ.

ວິທີການສະນັບສະຫນູນອົງກອນຂອງພວກເຮົາ ກໍ່ຄືການຮື້ ຍືດຜ່ານປະຕູເຂົ້າຊົມງານຂອງພວກເຮົາ ຫລື ດ້ວຍການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອໂດຍກົງກໍ່ໄດ້.

ຂອບໃຈຫລາຍໆສຳລັບເວລາຂອງທ່ານ ແລະ ຄວາມສົນໃຈກັບວຽກງານຂອງພວກເຮົາ.

Bnon Vong Event Co-chair(ປະທານຈັດງານ)	Kim Pathammavong Event Co-chair(ປະທານຈັດງານ)		
2010 LAS Officers (ເຂົ້າພະນັກງານປະຈຳອົງກອນຂອງພວກເຮົາປີ 2010)			
Nea Douangprasouth President ປະທານ	Noy Louannarath Bozarth Vice President ຮອງປະທານ	Noel Kenemunisoth Secretary ເລຂາ	Laddha Indara Treasurer ການເງິນ

2010 LAS Officers



Kim Ting Pathammavong
Cultural Director

Kim is the Vice President of Culture for LAS. She teaches children and adults in the traditional Natasinh dance style. Ting moved to Atlanta from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 2002.

She joined LAS as the Natasinh Dance Group instructor and Lao culture and traditions instructor in 2007. Ting has been dancing in the traditional Lao styles since she was 9 years old, and she was also very involved in the Lao community when she lived in Wisconsin.

Teaching and coaching the dance team has brought Kim much joy and she hopes to continue her efforts with LAS for many more years to come.



Dao Malaythong
Public Relations

Our children is my inspiration, and the main reason why I am so involved with LAS and the community. They are the leaders of our future! We want to instill in them a good foundation, encouraging

them the importance in pursuing higher education, and preserving the beauty of our culture and heritage.

I'm so proud to be involved with the LAS Ball and to be a part of LAS family! Our Ball would not be a success without the support of the community! Thanks to all the honored guests, community leaders, sponsors, performers, volunteers, and most of all the co-chairs that work so diligently putting this Ball together!



Mino Sundara
Marketing

Mino Sundara was born in Bangkok, Thailand in 1983 within the refugee camps. He spent his youth between the years of 1984 and 1994 in Florida after his family migrated to the United States from Laos. Mino spent most of his teen years in Atlanta, Georgia where he pursued his college education in Information Technology Systems with a focus on Multimedia and Graphic Design. Mino is currently pursuing his second degree at Gainesville State College in Communications.

As a young and aspiring professional, Mino is actively involved within the Asian community, artist community and the non-profit sector. He is also associated with NAAAP – Atlanta (National Association of Asian American Professionals) where he is part of the Marketing and Communication Board of Directors. During his spare time, Mino enjoys volunteering in the community, mentoring children and young adults, traveling, golfing, running competitions, and enjoying time with great friends.



Laddha Indara
Treasurer



Cookie Daravanh Morey
Advisor

ບໍລິສັດ ນັກແລ່ນ ລາວ

Lao Runners Company

"You either run or You don't"

Lao Runners Company (LRC), was founded by Amphone Sengchanh on September 23rd, 2010. The purpose of LRC is to promote better health and fitness through running. LRC invites membership to anyone who enjoys running. LRC believes to be healthier or to get in better shape one has to run.

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...is proud to support the 6th Annual Laotian American Society Charity Ball

LANA would like to acknowledge, congratulate, and support the LAS Scholarship Program and appreciate their partnership with LANA in the 2010 Decennial Census in communicating with our community, be proud of being Laotian, to ensure we are fully counted.

LANA is the premier resource and advocacy organization in the United States that cultivates the strengths and leadership of all Laotian Americans comprising of the diverse ethnic communities from Hmong, Iu-Mien, Khmu, Lahu, Lao, Tai Lue, Phu Tai, Tai Dam, Tai Phuan and other descendants from Laos who make up the dynamic and collective Laotian American community.



The Mission of the Laotian American National Alliance, Inc. (LANA) as a national organization, is dedicated to advancing the social and economic well-being of Laotian Americans in the United States through civic participation and publicpolicy advocacy.

To fulfill its mission, LANA has established the following goals to:

- Advocate for social justice, equal opportunity & fair treatment for all multi-ethnics from Laos;
- Promote civic participation, education, & leadership;
- Develop a new generation of non-profit, public sector, & corporate leaders;
- Advance coalitions & community building;
- Increase funding support for Laotian Community Based Organizations and Faith Based Organizations.
- Foster cultural heritage.

SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, April 30th, 2011 San Francisco's 3rd Annual International Lao New Year Festival, Day: City Hall's Civic Center Plaza and Evening: Cathedral of St. Mary

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Laotian American Society would like to thank United Parcel Service for their continued support of the LAS Scholarship Awards.

Printing of this Program Book was made possible by generous donations from UPS.

Unsung Heroes

Phouthone Bouchareun Nguyen



On February 15, 1980, my elder sister and I heeded my grandfather's words: "Follow the Setting Sun." We embarked on a perilous jungle flight toward the Mekong River. When my mind was not focused on my immediate goal, survival, I hoped that one day if I made it to my final destination, the United States, I would be able to fulfill my dream of becoming a doctor. At the beginning of my journey, I carried a bag of rice, a lighter, some clothes, a cooking pot, and a backpack with my childhood pictures. During the journey we sometimes went without food and water. Many people fleeing Laos died of starvation or gunshot wounds.

On March 2, 1980, we reached the Ubon Refugee Camp, Thailand, west of Laos. Three months later, my mother and brother joined us. Unfortunately, my father never had a chance to escape because the Communist government sent him to a concentration camp. We spent one year and three months in a refugee camp before we were eligible to come to the United States. Conditions at the camp were not much different from the jungle. We lacked electricity, indoor plumbing, running water and adequate food. We lived in primitive huts that were so small that we practically crawled in and out. After the horrible death of my grandfather, medicine became my passion. I was proud and privileged to work translating at a camp medical clinic.

On June 24, 1981, we arrived in New Orleans, Louisiana. Everything here was different and confusing. Growing up without a father or financial support, I worked hard to help my family make ends meet. I took on many adult responsibilities at an early age. Since my mother did not know how to read and write, I planned the bill payments and brought her to and from work. When we first arrived, my mother had three children, few skills, and no education. Knowing very little English, we could only work as dishwashers. I worked 30 to 40 hours a week during high school. I also volunteered at a Laotian Organization, helping the newly arrived refugees. Since we only earned minimum wage, we shared a two-bedroom house with another Laotian family of five for a year and a half before moving to Georgia.

I learned a lot from the hardships that I experienced while growing up, which made me very independent, self motivated, and determined. My mother taught me to be a good American and Laotian. I felt fortunate to have survived the terrible war and to be safe in a new homeland with the opportunity to attend school.

Rebecca Eleanor Delehanty



Mrs. "Dee" is but one of the many kind and generous people from the church that sponsored us. From my family alone, I can name Ed and Rebecca Delehanty, Grandma Dorothy and Fred Zettel, Mr. and Mrs. Wrenshaw, the Swanns, and many others who helped feed, clothe, and provide a new life for strangers they never met or seen before.

On behalf of every Laotian Refugee Family across the world, Thank You.

- The Vongkhamchanh Family

Unsung Heroes

Nimnouan Lengsavath



She first came to the United States in 1965 as a Fulbright Scholar exchange student. After graduating, she taught Lao and English to foreigners in Vientiane, Laos. In 1975 she came to the United States as a refugee. She, along with United Methodist Church of Syracuse, helped sponsor 12 of her brothers and sisters to come over to the United States. Being from a single parent household, she also took up the role of a second mother. She is now retired from the U.S. Postal Service.

Manophet Mouidouangdy 1969 - 2010



Manophet was one of those unsung heroes whose life was selflessly and effectively dedicated to making a difference in this world. Early life for Manophet was "challenging" to say the least: six dark years from age two to age eight living every day and night with his mother and two siblings (along with several other families) in a cave in northern Laos, while outside bombs rained down. Even when they finally stopped and he could live in the outside world, the bombs continued to scar his life and his psyche. When Manophet was 12 years old, he and his friends were kicking around a small metal ball one of them had just found. Manophet had just left a group for a moment when he saw five of his classmates fall and eventually die from a hail of metal shards from the cluster bomb they had mistaken for a plaything.

In early manhood both Manophet and his brother were wounded by another "bombie". And he never recovered from the heart-wrenching drama of his wife and baby daughter being taken across a border which he was not allowed to cross. He never got to see either of them again. For many, such early devastating traumas would produce an angry bitter man. But Manophet's soul was made of different stuff. He became a prince of active goodness. He adopted three Hmong sons, he worked daily helping to clean up the many unexploded bombies, and he taught English to children hoping to find a path out of extreme poverty.

A typical day for Manophet was waking to several dozen children clamoring for their English class at 5:30 AM. Next he would drive his sons to school and then go to a full day of work on the unexploded bombs. After work he would teach three more hour-long classes and coach many of his students in soccer/football where only English was allowed to be spoken. Each day a total of about 250 eager students walking or biked—often several miles, even in pouring rain—to Manophet's classes. His rag-tag soccer team beat other teams which were sponsored by commercial enterprises, one of which included a national soccer champion. And for the past few months Manophet was attempting to overcome the bureaucratic and financial obstacles to having his championship team accept an invitation to compete internationally in Sweden this summer.

In all he touched, the size and the generosity of Manophet's spirit was beyond imagining. Jewish tradition says that people live on in the acts of goodness they perform. If that is true, Manophet will continue to have a strong and active life for a very long time.

In great sadness,

Paul Castleman & Linda Blackstone



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Royal Lao Classical Dancers
Nashville, TN

Royal Lao Classical Dancers is a non-profit organization and not organized for the private gain of any person.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to support in-depth, ongoing instruction in traditional Laotian dances. Youth will be taught Lao classical and folk dance traditions by legendary master dancers. Our goal is to educate, promote, and up hold the beautiful traditions of Lao cultures.



The Royal Lao Classical Dancers was founded by the former Royal Lao Dancer, Khamdy and his wife, Bangthong Chindavanh, in 1997. With the love of the cultural heritage and a goal to preserve and cherish the beautiful Lao cultures, Mr. and Mrs Chindavanh along with Mr. Sonnikhom Vanachitt, Ms. Vilayphone Kounlavong, and Ms. Thongchanh Sounthonevichit formed the Royal Lao Classical Dancers. The dancers at that time were the children and relatives of these founders. With the family system management, RLCD grew bigger and better every day.



Sonnikhom Vanachitt
RLCD Nashville, TN



Royal Lao Classical Dancers
www.rlcd.org

Caffeine

Atlanta, GA



LAS Natasinh Dance Group
Atlanta, GA



Lan Khonesavanh
Atlanta, GA



Elizabeth Bee Vichathep
Atlanta, GA