Hello beautiful members. This is Diep, your Public Relations Representative, back to you with another beautiful edition of Vung Tien. I hope everyone’s been having a good week and studying hard for your midterms. And Happy Halloween! Even if you didn’t go, you can always catch up by downloading a FREE, IN COLOR edition of the weekly newsletter at http://vsu.bol.ucla.edu/links.html

The best thing about it is that it’s IN COLOR! But I’ll stop pimping the newsletter (http://vsu.bol.ucla.edu/links.html) to address what this week’s meeting is about. Basically, it’s about SEA CLEAR this week. 3 points and a candy bar to anyone who can tell me what SEA CLEAR stands for! And no flipping to Pg 2! But yes, speaking from personal experience, I highly encourage everyone to get your own good-looking, funny, and understanding SEA CLEAR peer counselor, especially if you’re stressed and need someone to vent with. They’re always there for you, just like VSU Staff! But that’s enough pimping on my part, I’ll let the rest of staff take care of the rest. As always, enjoy the meeting and hopefully, you’ll learn something new and exciting, or at least meet some people. And study for your midterms! They’re important! Until next week and Happy Halloween!

With scariness,
Your PRR

P.S. Sorry this edition is so short! Midterms and all...

What Went Down...

Banh Mi Sale!

Thanks for all those who came to help out and John for taking pictures!!
SEA CLEAR!

SEACLEAR = Southeast Asian Campus Learning and Retention!

Formed in 1998 by UCLA by VSU, SEA CLEAR is the first student-initiated and student-run Southeast Asian retention project in the nation, it aims at improving dropout rates and academic performances of Southeast Asian students (including Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, Laotian and Hmong), while developing conscious student leaders.

Through the project's peer counseling, internship, and mentorship components, as well as through other supportive services offered by the Student Retention Center, SEA CLEAR seeks special interest in Academic Action students, subject to Dismissal students, and other Southeast Asian students based on the special circumstances they face. These students face many obstacles such as financial hardship, family obligation, and lack of support in their educational career, which can lead them to being subject to dismissal, or academic action, thus contributing to the low graduation rate of Southeast Asian students. SEA CLEAR also monitors the retention of student leaders to make sure that their leading roles do not take a toll on their academic success.

Acronym of the Week

SEA CLEAR

The core project staff of nine students serves over 200 UCLA students every year!

This Week in VN

Your Weekly Source for Vietnamese News

Tuesday, October 30, 2007

Vietnam 'key for N Korea reform'

By Nga Pham

BBC Vietnamese Service

North Korean Prime Minister Kim Yong-il is in Vietnam on an official visit, which has raised hopes that the so-called hermit kingdom might, at last, be opening up. This rare trip through South East Asia will also take Mr Kim to Malaysia, Cambodia and Laos.

But some analysts believe that Vietnam is where the North Koreans are turning for some much-needed lessons in market economy. "I think there is currently great interest in North Korea in Vietnam’s way of economic reform," says Hwang Gwi-yeon, a professor in international relations at the Pusan University of Foreign Studies, South Korea. "The situation in North Korea is similar to that in Vietnam many years ago and Vietnam has provided a very suitable model of development."

Mr Kim, who is in charge of economic policy in the North Korean cabinet, will, no doubt, try to gather experience and establish contacts in the fast-growing region.

He arrived Vietnam’s capital, Hanoi, late last week with a 30-strong entourage including Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun and Minister of Agriculture Ri Kyong-sik. Their modest-looking Tupolev 134B plane, which was also used by the Vietnamese national carrier some 20 years ago, sat at Noi Bai airport like a bleak reminder of Hanoi’s own pre-renovation past. But the days of centralised economy are long gone, and the Vietnamese are not shy to show the guests from Pyongyang what kind of prosperity economic reforms can bring.

Mr Kim was put in a luxury black Mercedes limousine before being whisked off to his designated hotel - a five-star establishment on the famous West Lake.

'Eager' to visit

During his four days in the country, the North Korean PM has witnessed some of the more successful examples of Vietnam’s transition to the market economy. He was taken to visit a coal mine and a sea port in the north, before going south to visit an industrial processing zone near Ho Chi Minh City. Pham Tien Dam, an official from Nui Beo coal mine in Quang Ninh province, said Mr Kim was impressed with what he saw.
"He didn’t ask any questions but went directly to the mine with his people,” Mr Pham said. “He was eager to visit our mine because in his opinion coal was the food for industrial production and he was told that our company is doing very well."

Vietnam, one of the few remaining communist countries, has certainly drawn an impressive picture of economic development since the doi moi, or renovation, process began in 1986. With a 9% growth rate projected for 2008, the Vietnamese leadership hopes to take the country off the list of poor nations and make it a mid-income one as soon as next year.

Some analysts believe that the most attractive aspect of Vietnam’s development to North Korea is the way it has maintained political stability and economic growth in a one-party regime. “Vietnam is totally stable. It is a communist state but its economy develops in a capitalist way,” says Prof Hwang. “Communism and capitalism existing at the same time? Vietnam has proved it can be done.”

‘Joyfully’ accepted

North Korea had a brush with capitalism in 2002 when leader Kim Jong-il appointed a Chinese-Dutch businessman to set up and run a special economic zone near the Chinese border. But the plan for the Sinuiju Special Administrative Region was dropped after the businessman, Yang Bin, was arrested by the Chinese for committing “commercial crimes”. The arrest was interpreted by many as Beijing’s way of expressing its anger about not being consulted in the matter, which in the future might reduce the dependence of Pyongyang on its mighty neighbour.

The Vietnam model seems to be so attractive to the North Koreans that Kim Jong-il himself is said to be considering going to experience it at first hand. During his trip to North Korea in October, Vietnam’s Communist Party chief Nong Duc Manh extended an invitation to Kim Jong-il to visit Vietnam. Vietnamese media reported that he "joyfully accepted" the offer.

The Chinese language weekly, Yazhou Zhoukan, based in Hong Kong, quoted the Vietnamese Deputy Prime Minister Pham Gia Khiem as saying that the North Korean PM’s trip is partly aimed at preparing for Chairman Kim’s visit. While the date for that visit has not yet been disclosed, speculation has already started on how Mr Kim, who is afraid of flying, will get to Vietnam. Should he wish to travel by train, the only way to reach Hanoi is via China - a trip that would take about 70 hours one-way.

Story from BBC NEWS: Published: 2007/10/30 00:28:19 GMT © BBC MMVII

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The Legend of Cong Rồng Cháu Tiên

Cong Rồng Cháu Tiên (pronounced Cong Ron Chow Then) means The Dragon and Fairy Descendants, a common term to describe the origin of the Vietnamese people. It usually accompanies a well-known Vietnamese legend that goes like this:

Thousands of years ago, there was a King named Lac Long Quân, who was believed to be descended from the line of the Dragons. Lac Long Quân had superhuman strength, and he liked to stay near water.

De Lai, king of a northern tribe, with his daughter Âu Cơ made a trip to visit the south. Admiring Lac Long Quân’s talent, De Lai married Âu Cơ to Lac Long Quân. Âu Cơ became pregnant and gave birth to a large sac. The sac kept getting bigger and bigger and on the seventh day, it burst. There were one hundred eggs in the sac, and they hatched into one hundred beautiful children.

Even though Lac Long Quân now had a family of his own, he often missed the coast.

One day, Lac Long Quân told Âu Cơ: “I am from the Dragon line. I like to dwell on the Coast. You are from the Fairy line, you like to be in the highlands. Therefore, we can no longer live together. It is better that we separate now. You take fifty children to the highlands, and I will take fifty children down the coast…”

So, Lac Long Quân took fifty children to the coast and divided the areas to govern. He taught his people the skills of fishing and the art of tattoos so that when they dove into the water, the tattoos would scare off other marine animals.

He also educated the people about agriculture -- how to sow rice seeds and harvest rice. He showed them how rice can be cooked in a bamboo tube with some water and broiled over an open fire. When done, the bamboo tube is split and delicious cooked rice is inside.

Au Cơ took fifty children to the highlands, and also divided the areas to govern. The people who went to live in the jungle or the mountainous regions learned to breed animals, and worked the land to grow fruit trees for food. They lived above the ground in houses built on stilts made of bamboo trees, to avoid wild animals.

Even though Lac Long Quân and Âu Cơ were separated, Lac Long Quân stated: “Despite the distance and separation, we must listen for one another and lend a hand to one another when needed. We must never let our bond be broken.”

Ever since then, the Vietnamese people have been scattered throughout South-East Asia. The children of Lac Long Quân and Âu Cơ are the ancestors of Vietnam, and so the Vietnamese are known as “Dragon and Fairy descendants” – “Cong Rồng Cháu Tiên”

- info courtesy of www.geocities.com/~wingsof100viet/dragon.htm

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Cultural Corner
Upcoming Events

Friday, Nov 9: TV Taping Fundraiser for the Chelsea Lately Show. Come help support VSU and help us raise money! Time: from 2-4:30PM, will leave at 1PM. Meet at Ackerman Turnaround. Contact: Timmy Luong, Fiscal Officer, 951.660.8667

Saturday, Nov 10: HOPE HS Conference @ our very own UCLA. Come help high school students make the most of their higher education opportunities in this fun-filled and very fulfilling volunteer opportunity! Become a Team leader, runner, or general volunteer. Breakfast and lunch will be provided! Wanna get involved? Contact: Jimmy Dao, VSU Conference Coordinator, JIMMYDAO@UCLA.EDU, (818)239-9942

Still Want to Be in VCN? It’s never too late!
VCN is a huge production that VSU puts on every year and it’s currently in its 28th production. So be part of something huge! There’s something for everyone!
Contact: Karen Tran, Cultural Coordinator vsuvcn2008@yahoo.com

Tentative Schedules (subject to change) for different components of VCN are:

Chorus
Mon. and Wed. 7-9pm Ackerman 3rd Floor Contact: Yvonne Hoang yvonne_hoang14@yahoo.com (408) 564-9641

Drama
Mon. and Wed. 7-9pm Ackerman 3rd Floor Contact: Minh Nguyen minhna@yahoo.com (714) 878-9566

Traditional Dance
Tues. 7-9pm Contact: Van Duong vanduong29@gmail.com 209-403-8563

Martial Arts
Thurs. 9-10pm Contact: Viet Le viettle87@ucla.edu 714-808-2593 Tom Nguyen tnguyenatucla@ucla.edu 714-876-5577

Modern Dance
Wed 9PM Contact: David Nguyen dxnguyen@ucla.edu 310-980-3715 Mike Adan mike.g.adan@gmail.com 626-755-5937

Costume
Assistant Needed Contact: Julie Nguyen jnthanh@ucla.edu (714) 458-4368

HOPE SITE!
Want to help others? Wanna get some community service? Come out to HOPE Site, help tutor high schoolers and be part of a rewarding experience! Tuesdays 1:30 PM - 6:30 PM (Westminster High School, OC)
- Thursdays 2:30 PM - 7:30 PM (Chinatown Branch Library, LA)
- Fridays 1:00 PM - 7:00 PM (Westminster High School, OC)
Meet at Student Activities Center, Room 106
If you would like to get involved, contact: Tina Ngo, Outreach Coordinator tinakngo@yahoo.com

SEA CLEAR Mentorship
SEA CLEAR Mentorship applications are still going on. Find out how you can be a mentor or a mentee for SEA CLEAR! Applications are outside the SEA CLEAR cubicle in the Student Activities Center (SAC) Rm 105. They will be accepted until Friday of Week 9 @ 5PM. Drop off your application in Layhannara’s box in the SEA CLEAR cubicle in SAC Rm 105.
For more information about mentorship: Layhannara Tep, SEA CLEAR Mentorship Coordinator ltep@ucla.edu

It’s midterms week so updates are very very short this week. Oh well, more time to study! Happy Halloween everyone!
-Your PRR