

Dear Friends,

The beginning of 2020 has reminded us all that the world can be a turbulent place and we hope you are staying safe during these challenging times. Now, more than ever, we are grateful to be a part of the PeaceTrees community. As we all check on loved ones, friends, and neighbors, and learn to connect with one another through virtual tools, we share a commitment to persist and support our global community.

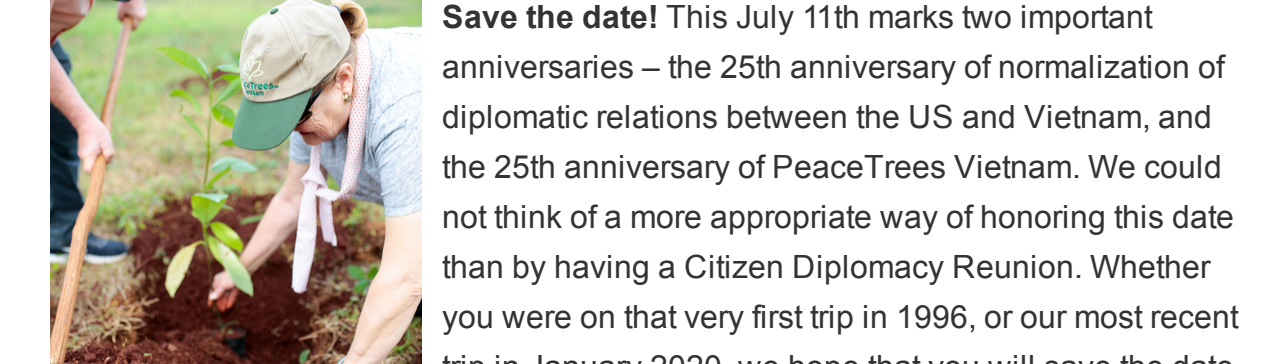
We are following all recommended guidelines put out in Vietnam and the US, and are working to ensure that the health and safety of our team, as well as those we serve, comes first. Our office staff in Seattle and Vietnam have begun to work remotely. To comply with new social distancing measures in Vietnam, our demining teams will temporarily pausing field operations for two weeks beginning on April 1st. There have been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Quang Tri province to date, and we are optimistic that these additional social distancing measures will help ensure that this remains the case.

In Vietnam, there have been 143 people confirmed with COVID-19, and zero deaths from the disease. Nearly 47,000 people are in quarantine and 24,300 tests have been administered throughout the country. Most schools across Vietnam have been closed since the Tết holiday, as the government was quick to take precautionary measures and do what they can to slow the virus as much as possible. Government programs are making sure that students in need are receiving food assistance during this time of instability.

We appreciate your continued support during these unprecedented times, and hope that the news we share in this newsletter will serve as a reminder of the tremendous amount of good work still being done in the world. We are wishing you and yours health and wellbeing throughout this uncertain time.

Warmly,

The PeaceTrees Team



### [Calling all previous Citizen Diplomats:](#)

**Save the date!** This July 11th marks two important anniversaries – the 25th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the US and Vietnam, and the 25th anniversary of PeaceTrees Vietnam. We could not think of a more appropriate way of honoring this date than by having a Citizen Diplomacy Reunion. Whether you were on that very first trip in 1996, or our most recent trip in January 2020, we hope that you will save the date and plan to join us as we honor 25 years of friendship and diplomacy building!

[Please RSVP for the event here!](#)

SAVE THE DATE


# PeaceTrees Citizen Diplomacy Reunion

July 11th, 2020

Seattle, WA

Join us in celebrating 25 years of friendship building on the anniversary of normalization between the US and Vietnam

To honor this day please join us for a conservation project at a Seattle park, followed by lunch and updates by our Executive Director, Claire Yunker, and Co-Founder, Jerilyn Brusseau.



### Recognizing April 4th - UN International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

In 2005, the UN General Assembly declared that each April 4th will be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

The General Assembly called for nations across the globe, non-governmental organizations, and the UN itself to help establish and develop national mine-action capacities in countries where explosive remnants of war are a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the civilian population, or an impediment to social and economic development.

According to the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, in 2017 alone, 7,239 individuals were in accidents involving unexploded ordnance (UXO) worldwide. 87% of victims are civilians, of which 50% are children. Many accidents go unreported, especially in countries experiencing conflict, so actual casualties are likely much higher.

As the PeaceTrees community knows well, unexploded ordnance hinders socio-economic development, restrict access to land and resources, and obstructs reconstruction efforts. Globally, there are over 60 nations and territories that still suffer from the legacy of unexploded ordnance from past conflicts.

Since the end of the Vietnam war, 45 years ago, there have been 105,073 casualties caused by UXO in Vietnam. This includes 38,978 individuals killed by an UXO accident, and another 66,093 survivors who were injured.

Every day, PeaceTrees' deminers work to ensure the safety of communities in central Vietnam through clearance, removal of UXO, and risk education. **We are thrilled to report that through collective mine action efforts, there have been no deaths caused by UXO in Quang Tri Province in the past two years.**

PeaceTrees Vietnam and our community partners continue to make meaningful progress in returning land back to individuals and families who remain the most impacted by the legacy of the US/Vietnam conflict.

The recognition of April 4th as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action allows us to pause and recognize our work in the context of a global issue. PeaceTrees Vietnam plays a small, yet significant role, in addressing the worldwide threat to safety, health and lives of civilians impacted by the legacies of war.

If you can, please consider contributing to this important work today:

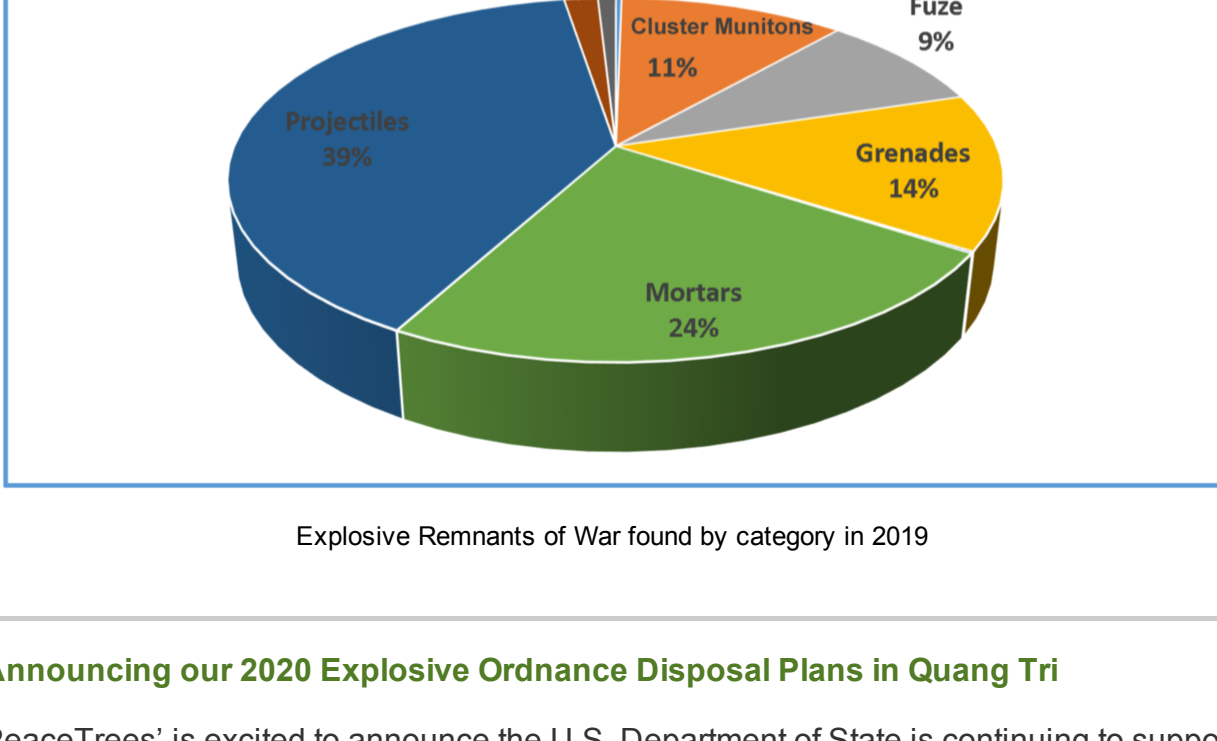
Contribute to PeaceTrees' work!



### 2019 End of Year EOD Results

We are proud to announce that in 2019 we exceeded all of our humanitarian demining goals for the year! The chart below shows the incredible progress that we made throughout the year - this is largely due to the increase of our team sizes that took place at the beginning of the year. In total we increased our productivity by 161 percent!

- We cleared 3,294,262 m2, which directly benefited 44,265 local residents.
- We educated 16,231 people on the risk associated with unexploded bombs and mines.
- Our teams located and safely destroyed 5,603 explosive remnants of war - which averages to about 16 explosives per day.
- In 2019 we released land back to communities for afforestation (36%), agro-forestry (42%), and agriculture (16%).
- This incredible progress is contributing to the goal of making Quang Tri Province cluster munition free by 2025!



Explosive Remnants of War found by category in 2019

### Announcing our 2020 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Plans in Quang Tri

PeaceTrees' is excited to announce the U.S. Department of State is continuing to support our teams in Quang Tri province throughout 2020. We will maintain our existing 102 demining staff and add one additional demining support team to focus on removal of dense foliage and underbrush. Cumulatively, our teams are aiming to clear 4,000,000 square meters of land and conduct 1,300 risk education sessions over the next year. 53,000 Quang Tri residents will benefit from these activities!



### Citizen Diplomacy Opportunities

PeaceTrees Citizen Diplomacy Trips provide an opportunity for volunteers to experience Vietnam from a unique and rewarding perspective and bring American and Vietnamese citizens together to work and play as a means of promoting peace, mutual understanding, and respect. Citizen Diplomacy travelers have the opportunity to see many areas within Vietnam, including Hà Nội, Huế, Đông Hà, Hội An and Ho Chi Minh City, plant trees at a PeaceTrees project site, and interact with Vietnamese community members in a meaningful way that few tourists ever experience. [Read traveler testimonials here!](#)

#### Upcoming Trip Dates:

**September 2020** - two week mid-September trip dates TBD

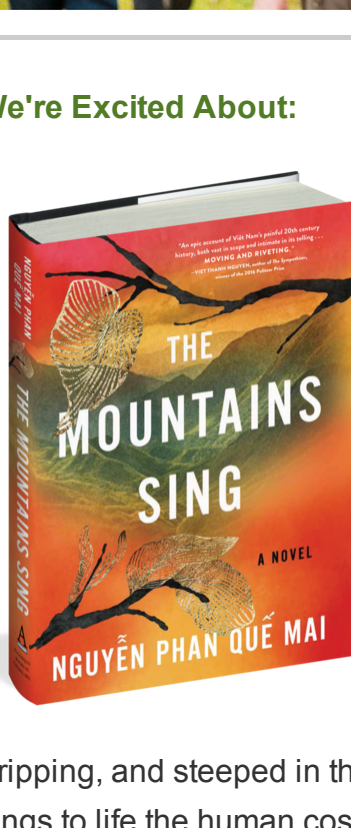
**Winter 2021** - two week trip tentatively planned for January of February - Dates TBD

**March 2021** - two week mid-March trip dates TBD

Email us at [info@peacetreesvietnam.org](mailto:info@peacetreesvietnam.org) or call us at (206) 441-6136 to learn more or to register!



### What We're Excited About:



**The Mountains Sing** The Mountains Sing tells an enveloping, multigenerational tale of the Trần family, set against the backdrop of the Việt Nam War. Trần Diệu Lan, who was born in 1920, was forced to flee her family farm with her six children during the Land Reform. Years later in Hà Nội, her young granddaughter, Hương, comes of age as her parents and uncles head off down the Hồ Chí Minh Trail to fight in a conflict that tore not just her beloved country, but her family apart.

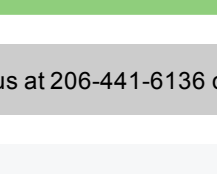
Vivid, gripping, and steeped in the language and traditions of Việt Nam, The Mountains Sing brings to life the human costs of this conflict from the point of view of the Vietnamese people themselves, while showing us the true power of kindness and hope.

**Enter to win a free giveaway of The Mountains Sing!** To be entered into the contest, all you need to do is [like us on Facebook](#) and comment on our most recent post to let us know that you did so. We will announce the winner on April 6th!

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[Looking for a creative way to continue to support PeaceTrees Vietnam from home?](#)

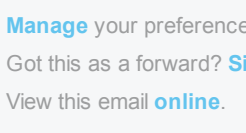
Consider shopping with Amazon Smile and setting PeaceTrees as your beneficiary. AmazonSmile is a program that donates 0.5% of your eligible purchases on Amazon to a charity of your choice. All you need to do is start your shopping at smile.amazon.com. The donation will be made at no extra cost to you and you will be contributing to PeaceTrees Vietnam's lifesaving work while you shop!



Contribute to PeaceTrees' work!

For more information contact us at 206-441-6136 or [info@peacetreesvietnam.org](mailto:info@peacetreesvietnam.org)

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