"The best way to take care of the future is to take care of the present moment" - Thich Nhat Hanh

FROM THE LEGACIES BOARD CHAIR TITUS PEACHEY

Dear Friends,

The year 2016 was a whirlwind of growth and a historic milestone for Legacies of War—President Obama's visit to Laos and pledge of $90 million for clearance operations and victim assistance. I am writing to thank you for your support and to tell you about the incredible impact that you are making with your generous gifts. But first, a brief introduction.

I first went to Laos in 1980, as a volunteer with Mennonite Central Committee’s (MCC) relief, development and peacebuilding program. During five years of work, my wife Linda and I traveled throughout the country and listened to the stories of Lao villagers who courageously worked in fields and gardens still littered with unexploded bombs and artillery shells.

For twenty years these villagers had no help, and had to deal with the unexploded ordnance (UXO) on their own at great risk. Many villagers were injured or lost their lives. And so I was honored to be able to return to Laos in 1994 on behalf of MCC, to work alongside the Mines Advisory Group and the Lao Government to set up the first humanitarian demining program in Laos.

That program continues today on a much larger scale, with the support of many governments. Given this personal background, I am so very pleased to be part of Legacies' efforts to ensure that the U.S. government does its part to help Laos heal from the devastating wounds of the past war. A few things you should know about Legacies of War...

We are a small organization with big dreams. We dream of the day when the millions of lethal bombs left behind by the U.S. air war in Laos will be destroyed. We dream of villagers tilling their soil in safety and Lao children playing in their school yards without fear. Thanks to your generosity, these dreams are beginning to come true.

Your contributions are having a big impact. Over the past 10 years, Legacies of War has played a key role in effecting a 10-fold increase in U.S. government funding for clearance and victim assistance work in Laos. Instead of $3 million per year, the U.S. has now pledged $30 million per year for the next three years! As a result, the rate of UXO clearance has increased, and the casualty rate has dropped from over 300 per year to under 50 per year.

We put your donations to work in very focused ways. We build relationships with policy makers in Congress and key officials in the State Department. We produce materials that help the American public understand the long-term impact of the air war in Laos. In our annual visits to Laos, we meet courageous deminers and survivors of UXO accidents who help us stay informed about developments on the ground. And we are a significant source for media and press inquiries about all aspects of the UXO work in Laos.

We still have a big job ahead. It looks like the UXO clearance work will still take well over a decade. And the work of caring for all those suffering from physical injury and psychological trauma will take a lifetime. We want to ensure that our government, in the words of President Obama, fulfills its "moral obligation to help Laos heal." With a new administration and congress, our continuing advocacy role is critical.

Titus Peachey, Board Chair (1996)

Channapha Khamvongsa, Executive Director, visiting with deminers in Xieng Khoang

http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1101814490173&ca=11af5ce4-5758-4f52-bb60-bd26db9e361
Your donations provide the resources and the encouragement we need to keep working! We hope that we can count on your continued support as we face new challenges in the year ahead. As you think about your year-end giving, will you please make a tax-deductible gift today of $5,000, $1,000, $500, or $100 to help us reach our goal? Also, consider joining us on our very first Learning Trip to Laos in May 2017. Learn first hand about the UXO issue in Laos and the people still affected by the war.

Help us make Laos safe for future generations - together, we can finish the job! I wish you and your families a great holiday season and a wonderful new year!

Thank you,

Titus Peachey
Board Chair

After you make your gift, will you share this appeal with 3 other people who might also be able to make a similar contribution?

"Travel is more than the seeing of sights; it is a change that goes on, deep and permanent, in the ideas of living." - Miriam Beard

For the first time, Legacies of War is offering a remarkable opportunity for our supporters to join us on an intimate trip to Laos in 2017. The trip will introduce you to the courageous and inspiring people who are building a new legacy of peace and safety in a land still haunted by a long-ago war. You'll have rare access to watch demining teams, meet with survivors, and dine and converse with diplomats, authors, artists, changemakers and other notable personalities in Laos. Join us for an intimate private reception with high-level policy makers and Vientiane luminaries.
The trip, limited to 12 travelers, will take place from May 2-12 and include travel to Vientiane, Xieng Khoang and Luang Prabang.

**Trip Itinerary - 10 Days:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location/Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Arrival VTE</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 3-4</td>
<td>Vientiane, intimate reception with high-level policy makers and Vientiane luminaries</td>
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<td>May 5-7</td>
<td>Xieng Khoang - Plain of Jars</td>
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<td>May 8-10</td>
<td>Luang Prabang - Village Visit</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>Vientiane</td>
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<td>May 12</td>
<td>Departure</td>
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Overview of the trip - click here: [Legacies UXO Lao Trip - 2017](#)

The fee is $7,500* per person or $10,000* for two travelers, which includes all in-country transportation, lodging and meals. The application for interested travelers are due Jan 15. Once accepted, you can secure your reservation and make a deposit (Due Feb 15). International travel to and from Vientiane is NOT included in the price. (*The contribution that exceeds the fair market value ($2,500) is tax deductible)

[**Trip Application** - Available Now - DUE JAN 15](#)

Please contact: info@legaciesofwar.org with questions! We look forward to an incredible learning opportunity and to welcome you to the Legacies family!

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